

LONDON SOCIETY.

JULY 1879.

A SHOP TO LET.

A SHOP was to let, not long since. It was in a main and flourishing street of the metropolis; it was on the best, or sunny, side of it; it was at a spot trodden by a myriad of busy feet daily, and reverberating with the roar and rattle of ten thousand busy wheels.

There were eight hundred and more inquirers who entered this shop to know particulars of its rent and so forth; and it is the intention here to make known the oddities of a few of them.



'W h e w !' went the eloquent whistle of one. 'Stiff, isn't it?' was shot out by another. Whilst a third cried, 'Hot enough, surely !' and they all three

vanished with uniform rapidity.

Then there came a little milliner, all finery, all emphasis, all expression. 'Fabulous !' she cried. 'Fabulous ! Fabulous !' with eyes up, head up, hands up; with eyes up, head up, hands up,

VOL. XXXVI. NO. CCXI.

all over again before she had taken herself away.

'What an awfu' rent !' declared a tall sharp Scotchwoman. 'It's quite reedie-ulous ! They'll nev-er pay it !'

Another lady—red-haired, tiny, timid—peeped in nervously, popped out nervously, peeped in nervously once more, must have received the answers to her nervous question like a charge from a faultless gun, since she was gone after it beyond the limits of the keenest investigation.



'What's the figure?' demanded a strapped up little man, as short

B

in speech as he was in stature; and as convinced of his own business-like affinities and acumen as if he had been a complete directorate or the entire Board of Trade.

He was told.

'Ah, very nice!' he cried, crying it sarcastically; and then he added, 'I had been in hopes, now, that you were going to say something decent.'

'And what would be something decent?' was the question put to him, in amused return.

'Why,' he cried out, 'a hundred a year of course!' (Exactly a third of the demand.) 'A hundred a year; not a penny more!' After which he was gone, in rebellion and revolution.

'La-la-li-lah! Tardle-di-dah!' sang a gentleman of the gay and dashing kind, as he sauntered in, unconscious of the agent sitting at a table, and as he sauntered to the shop's far end. 'La-la-li-lah!' went his song again; whilst he amused himself by opening all the available doors, by looking up at a skylight, by peering up the stairs. 'La-la-li-lah! Tardle-di-dah! De-dah-di—O, I beg your pardon!' for he had sauntered round into full face, and was as shocked as he should have been, with inquiries and answers, only troubled air to him, and he swiftly away, hot and blushing.

'Rather too important for me!' hammered out a pompous puffy little personage, with the evident intention of hammering in the clear notion that the importance was nothing equivalent to his own.

'Ah, that premium, that premium!' was the deprecating cry of a tall and middle-aged shrew, as she shook her head and her forefinger archly, and was obliged to depart without any farther proceeding.

And, indeed, it must have been rather aggravating (to moneyless

people) to be asked for money down, as some sign that they had money in possession, and as some



sort of security that, after three months' run of a business-place, there would be something tangible for the landlord of it forthcoming.

A tall vinegarish young lady, for instance, was evidently torn with this aggravation painfully. 'Now, what is premium for?' she fretted. 'Premium is what I can't understand!'

A hard man, with only his head in, and his wife still out, treated the idea with withering scorn. 'What's the premium for?' he demanded. 'There's no business; the place is a mere shell, dirty, and empty! Ha!'—in a mode quite melodramatic—'shouldn't think of paying a premium to anybody, anyhow, anywhere!'

A plump young girl, with a ragged hat, with no gloves, with soiled flesh, with a general aspect of tawdriness and poor lodgings and dissipation, melted down premium, rent, repairs, stock, furniture, decoration, everything, into

the thinnest and airiest intangibility.

'Two hundred pounds' premium?' she remarked easily. 'Ah well, that's not much—is it?—considering where the shop is, and how much I like it. Now, I'll just tell you how I'm placed. My father is dead, and my mother has a large family of young children to look to; but my aunt has taken us all in, and I'm sure she'd come and live with us here directly. You see, I've been apprenticed to a milliner, and I could sell millinery in this shop very nicely; and what with the things mamma has and the things my aunt has I could manage beautifully. Then we have a little money papa left, perhaps twenty pounds; and I'm going now to work at that large draper's—day-worker, you know—and if I stay a fortnight I shall earn another two pounds, and then to make up the rest I'll even sell my trinkets; I sha'n't mind it at all! Yes,—with one or two decisive looks round—'I'm sure I could make a very tasty shop of it. So will you promise you won't let anybody else have it till six o'clock? Thank you. Good-day. I'm sure to come.' For it was scarcely worth while to crush out such a baseless dreamer by any recital of facts and figures; and if enjoyment were to be found in nonsensical narrations, the enjoyment might as well remain.

A fit successor to this young person was a grandiloquent old lady, similarly affected with light-headedness and eccentricity. She was stately-featured, rusty, pinched; and remarkably ceremonious, yet glib.

'I am on my way now to consult my solicitors,' she said, confidentially, with excellent accent and articulation. 'My solicitors are highly respectable gentlemen

of Lincoln's Inn; they have sent for me. I should explain that I am the most fortunate woman over all my affairs, the most business-like. I happen to be talented, very talented, that's how it is. To see me now, you would scarcely think it, for I'm not dressed, you see, being only on my way to my solicitors (highly respectable gentlemen of Lincoln's Inn); but I am the cleverest designer in London. Now, of course, if I take this shop, I shall get a manager. From Paris. That would be my plan. For myself, I should apply myself to the rest of my very extensive business affairs. I should direct the manager (from Paris) only; and I should succeed admirably. I should make a fortune in no time.'

Had the good lady given the smallest evidence of having made even half a fortune up to then, this would have been more credible. She and Fortune, however, were not on terms of intimate acquaintance; unless, indeed, Fortune's most favoured friends are in the habit of being dressed in torn lace and battered millinery, in slit silk and ropy ribbons. She was gone, though, as the rest had gone, with her calculations in her head clear and precise and confident, and she gave place to a man of about thirty years of age, tall, dark, wild, wiry; the possessor of a dozenfold anybody else's jerk and energy and boring power and impetuosity.

'Bless me!' he cried, as he rushed in, with a tear and a stare. 'This shop to let? Is it possible? Goo-oodness gracious me! To let? And has there ever been any business done in it? And what sort of business, pray, in the world? Ah, that's not my business, nor anything near it. I'm a so-and-so maker. I do a most pushing business in one of

the most pushing thoroughfares. I have a partner too. Capital man. Suit each other excellently. Just as pushing as I am. Now,



it strikes me we might do another pushing trade here. There's a residence up-stairs, isn't there? Ah, I thought so. Then I'll just rush up and look.'

And he did, after which he rushed down again, with the same tear and stare, the same burst of vivid ejaculation.

'Bless me!' it began, as before. 'Goo-oodness gracious me! And such a place is to let? And you mean to tell me that a man and his wife lived in this place, just as I see it in this dirt and this condition? Goo-oodness gracious! Well, I'll just dot the terms down in my book. No chair, thank you; no, I'll stand, this will do. Now then, what's to-day, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday? Ah yes, to be sure. And the rent is 200*l.*, 300*l.*, 400*l.*, what? Thank you. And—eh, what do you say? A premium of 200*l.* Nonsense! Why, you want a capitalist to take the place! A capitalist!

And I'm no capitalist, I'm a pushing man. However, my partner will be the man to judge. And—let me see. How long is the lease? Seven years, fourteen, twenty-one, forty, fifty, ninety-nine! Ah, I have it all right now. Thank you. But—bless me! Goo-oodness gracious! Goo-oodness hearts alive!' And the same was his refrain half-a-dozen times again, as he strode out, by jerks or pulses, and as he stopped at every pulse to give an exclamation more.

He shall be contrasted with a suave, with a smooth, with an insinuating, gentleman; a pattern of primness and polish, as innocent of commerce and commercial necessities as might be a choice flower in a conservatory.

'Now,' said this gentleman, 'now,' and he approached very



close, with his forefinger up, and he himself nearly on tip-toe, 'this will be an excellent spot for a hose-er's, I am certain. It is true there's a hose-er only three doors off, but that is all in its favour. I am no hose-er myself; it is that I have a friend, in the country, whose daughter is on

the point of being married. Nay, my strong impression is that she is married. My friend (Mr. Jenkins of Jenkshire, very wealthy) gave me to understand the wedding was fixed for either the very end of last month, or the very beginning of this, I cannot call to mind now which; and as to-day is the 3d, I think most likely it is all over. Now—with the forefinger up again, and upon his lips coquettishly,—‘my friend (Mr. Jenkins of Jenkshire)—Whew, whew! Excuse me, pray! Whew, whew, whew!’

It was a shrill whistle; it was a breathless glance round; and the polite gentleman was off, threading in and out of the street-folk, in ardent chase of a white poodle-dog. The recovery was speedy, and brought the polite gentleman back again, out of breath, it is true, but in no way out of smoothness, or polish, or silky circumlocution.

‘Excuse me, excuse me,’ went his suave apologies; ‘but as I was saying, when I had to run away so unceremoniously, my thought is—Whew! Where’s that dog? Whew! Ah, all right! Thank you!—my thought is that as this is a capital spot for a hose-er’s, I’ll tell my friend (Mr. Jenkins) all about it. Now—Whew, whew, whew, whew!’

Off again. First the white poodle, and then the polite gentleman. Off; with the whistle growing fainter, with the nimble legs lost to view soon, entirely among the hurrying crowd. But the nimble legs brought the polite gentleman back in time, his dog with him, and he as polite as before, and as much on tiptoe. And why had he returned? Simply to bid a smooth good-day; simply to put an ornamental finis, as it were, to his satin-bound diamond-edition volume. For he

had the terms; he had delivered himself of his valuable hose-er opinion; and there was nothing more to be done.

Now foreigners, very oddly, seemed particularly attracted by this shop that was to let. They came, sometimes two and three a day, and always fruitlessly.

‘Vot ees eet to go een?’ asked a white-fleshed, a black-haired, unhappy little Frenchman. ‘Ah, sanka!’ went his sigh, when he was told, and when the telling made him unhappily go out again.

‘Seuce me,’ was the cry of a pretty young German lady, who had mastered ‘raint,’ but was powerlessly aground at the new idea of premium. ‘Dat, dat! Ah, ‘seuce me, I don’ know vot dat iss!’ And she had to shrug herself away, remaining in the fog, or veil, of mystification.

‘It iss ee-mence!’ came from another German lady, neither pretty nor young, but a very wasp for buzz and vividness. ‘And dis—dis street iss nutting!’ she declared tossingly, with her superior continental judgment of traffic and locality. ‘I don’ tink moch of dis street, dis. It iss nutting, I say to you!’



‘Gootness in heavens high!’

bubbled out the exclamation of a round little Dutchman, with some humour in him. 'Den I veesh I vos de lantlort! Ah, I veesh I hat half a tozen houces! You make me afrait!' So his fear took his hat off gaily, and made him recross the threshold.

But the oddest foreigner of all was a ruddy, stumpy, chubby, old Frenchman. He was dressed in thick country-cut brown cloth; he was as perfect a John-Bull farmer as if he had been born in



Cornshire, and had always breakfasted on beer and bacon. There never was a greater philological surprise than when his broad lips broadened to bring out the Gallic-Anglo 'Von veek,' instead of the expected provincial 'Oi be,' and 'Zounds,' and 'Zur.'

'Von veek?' was his question; looking very earnest and thorough. 'How moech par von veek?'

There was no price for one week he was told. The premises were to be let for a long time, at a yearly rental; to a man who could afford a large outlay for repairs and alterations.

'Mais, I haf von leetle egga-ee-bee-zion,' he urged. 'Von vair goot leetle egga-ee-bee-zion; et I most haf place for von veek, two veek, tree veek, to show. Say, s'il vous plait, how moech?'

The fact of a long lease had kind repetition. The impossibility to let for a temporary purpose was explained.

But the sturdy monsieur stuck to his proposition sturdily. 'Ah, mais von veek!' he repeated. 'No matter von veek, two veek, tree veek, more! I show my leetle egga-ee-bee-zion, et de maison ees here, all de same! Ah, say von veek! My leetle egga-ee-bee-zion be so goot here! Dair ees beaucoup de passage, et I most haf de monde to see my egga-ee-bee-zion. Say, now, for von veek. Say how moech?'

Refusal had to come once more; with the suggestion accompanying it that there might be neighbourhoods less solid, less prosperous, where rooms might be hired for the short period required. No. A spot less solid, less prosperous, held no fascination. To the place where he then stood the burly foreigner stuck, with very anti-Gallic and thorough Britannic adhesion.

'My leetle egga-ee-bee-zion has been in Paris, dans le Rue Rivoli,' his bluff coaxing continued. 'In Bruxelles, in Marseilles, in Rouen, in Toulouse, in Bordeaux—partout. My leetle egga-ee-bee-zion veel be so goot here. It is ethnologique—it. It is known vot it ees, ethnologique! Yes?'

Quite well (with a secret suspicion of stare-eyed wax-work). But, in spite of it, there was allusion to the limited size of the shop, to the comparative low height of it, to—anything thought to be the means of dislodging the inquirer safely and affably.

'Ah, it veel be goot!' cried

the Frenchman, knocking all the excuses down; painstaking, eager, serious, as he was. 'I veel haf de monde come for tree pence, four pence. It ees scientifique, my leetle eggs-ee-bee-zion; it ees in de Costom House now, moch money for me; I can bring le tout here; I veel haf de musique; all. Say?'

It was useless, of course, and at last it was seen to be useless; and the breadth and the brown clothing and the persuasiveness reluctantly disappeared. Now the thought of the fitness of this shop that was to let to be a place for an exhibition came to an Englishman also. He entered, making a short business-like proposal to fit it up for a giant, becoming petrified with astonishment when the proposal was as shortly declined. Might the premises be hired for a few days for an auction? was a question also several times repeated; the auctions being of glass, say, of a trunk-maker's stock, of cheap jewelry, of electro-plate. Indeed, the place was conceived, on a wild superficial glance, to be suitable for every purpose and every trade almost under the sun. And as it is manifestly impossible for any premises anywhere to be fit for everything, so these poor premises could not be fit either; and when this was discovered, they became the target for a perfect pelt of depreciatory remarks.

'Why! Half-a-dozen cabinets would fill it up,' cried a cabinet-maker, looking indignantly at the bricks and mortar, as if he would like to pestle them into crumbs. 'Just see! If I were to hang chandeliers all along this ceiling, there's no one could walk under,' complained a chandelier-dealer; wanting, he, to annihilate lath and plaster. 'Useless,' decided a hairdresser. 'There's no

room for gentlemen on the shop-floor, and gentlemen *never* go upstairs; the ladies' trade only is done above!' Then the house was said to be a 'rummy' old place (with a wink); to be in the hole (with a sneer); in the flat (critically); to be wrong for the various reasons that it had no workshops at the back, no entrance in the rear, no back-parlour, no deeper run behind, no new walls, no new front, no new floor, no new stairs; that it was in shocking condition, was 'awfully' old, was so *very* down, was too large, was too small, was without its 'cases,' wanted rebuilding, was such that a lease of it—*bless me!*—would be a burden and not a benefit! was certainly no accommodation to be paid for, anyhow!

But among the eight hundred (odd) inquirers, there were many who knew the market-value of the place to a sixpence, and who would have bought it, out and out (at a bright reduction), forthwith.

'Come, ascertain, will you, if I can have it for 3500*l*.' said a pock-marked impecunious-looking man, carrying a black-leather bag. 'And say, please, I'm prepared to give a twenty-pound cheque on the Such Bank, as a deposit, down.'

A couple of Assyrian-featured young Hebrew brothers, in fawn-coloured top-coats, offered 3000*l*. for the 'old place,' after only a minute's jaunt inspection; some ladies were not indisposed to heap the thousands up into four; and whenever persons did approve, they would come in three times, four times, five times; they would bring with them their builders, their advisers, their wives; they would measure, sound, test, scrape, poke in penknives, rattle at walls, tap windows, pull bells, give heavy jumps upon the floor, do

all sorts of things to be sure of safety and solidity.

'Well, what do you ask *now*?' cried a tall hard man, in a low soft hat, particularly active at this sort of work, and who wrote all his researches and discoveries in a note-book, whilst he kept rushing in and out to look up at the house-front and write down something more. 'You're down of course? Not! Why, you'll never get it! Don't tell *me*!'

He was reminded of the district, of the traffic, of how the tradespeople invariably prospered, to the right, to the left, and straight over, across.

'Tut-tut!' he cried, after some rapid glances and another rush. 'That fellow there is doing well enough, I admit; but why? Because he married a wife with a large fortune! Not but what he's a fine fellow, mind you. Yes, yes, Bobby's a fine fellow! Bobby having country estates, carriages, position, scientific reputation; Bobby being, probably, utterly ignorant of even this familiar's existence. 'Poor Bob, poor Bob! Ah, I know Bobby well enough! But the terms? You don't mean to say—'

Yes; but there had been the meaning to say, and, in the end, the tall hard man in the low soft hat found he had dotted down memoranda in his note-book for very little purpose, and had not won his way, for all his overbearance and loud expostulation.

'It's only me,' squeezed out a wheezy shabby little old man (for a variety), advancing just his mottled old head in and nothing more. 'It's *only* me! What is the rent, may I ask? I'm so often asked by others, and as I don't know, I can't tell!'

'Eh?' venturing in a little farther, and showing very stained and threadbare clothes. 'I'm a

little deaf, I beg your pardon, and there's a great noise going on with the coaches and other things



on wheels. O, ah, well, you'll be sure to let, you know, because all the property on this spot always *does*. But I'll tell you what,' and he came in then quite, being about to impart a valuable secret: 'it is that *confounded* hoarding round the building next door that's agin you! There; but never mind. It will be gone soon. And I thought as it was *only* me, there was no harm for me just to pop in, was there? With which the good-natured little man popped out again, taking his curious little individuality away.

A fantastic and mannered little milliner, out of all the fantastic and mannered little milliners who entered, shall next be placed on record.

'I'm a great favourite,' she minced out, with solid self-belief, —'a great favourite with many members of the aristocracy. There's Lady Greenwichia Gravesend, and there's Lady Portmadoc, and the Countess of Merioneth—all their ladyships know me, and like me,

and would give me their custom directly. I know their style, and can suit them. Lady Greenwich in particular, has said to me often, "Nellie, Nellie, why *don't* you take a shop for yourself, and make your fortune!" She thinks so much of me, she'll let me have all the money I want, I'm certain. And besides, there's her ladyship's sister, the Honourable Mrs. Torquay, just married; and there's her ladyship's mamma, the Countess-dowager of Newbiggin-on-the-Sea: I should have their custom as well, only for her ladyship's asking. So I shall think about it, seriously. Yes, I'd have caps and headdresses in that window, and bonnets in this, and muslin-curtains here, and looking-glasses all round; and a carpet on the floor, and—and—(after a good many more minutes of the unnecessary confidence and commercial pro and con.)—"I'll lay all my plans before Lady Greenwich, and you'll be sure to see me again, very soon."

There could not, in fact, have been any variety of man, woman, or child, who did not come in to this shop that was to let. Horsey men, marked with smallpox, drove up in traps; humpty-backed women followed; and women with respirators and great blue bull's-eye specs. Dainty little bodies arrived, and quarrelsome personages, and ratty little men, and nose people, high in the talk, the manner, and the brow. Some women came who were old, and old-fashioned with barrel-curls; some who were young, and who aimlessly hung about, neither staying nor going, whilst they rolled their tongues. A wee man would appear dwindled to a mere mite; and then there would enter a stagey 'father,' snortish, waisted, caned, and ringed. An ostrich-like lady, using (sideways)

a round brown eye, would be succeeded by a drabby person, fawn-faced, in fawn silk. From a red-bearded foreigner in a flapped fur cap, there had to be a turn to a beautiful English lady with amber hair, and tinted eyelashes,



and cheeks manufactured of a soft and peachy pink. It was diversion enough, indeed, to watch, to note; to take people in their humour, to see teaching in them, and to carry the lesson home. As for the house—

'Say'st thou that house is dark? Why, it hath bay-windows, transparent as barricadoes; and the clear stones, towards the south-north, are as lustrous as ebony!'

Of a truth, quite as absurd things were said of this shop that was to let, during ten months' intimacy with it. But let it be noted that when the people came who finally took it, they came thoughtfully and quietly, being full of anxiety and deliberation; having no satire or

bluster, no supposition that they would get their purpose answered by haughtiness or by the cut of a joke. They had made their calculations before they arrived, for they knew the main points of the spot they were coming to, the likely price of it, the scale of accommodation probably to be found. They wished to be undisturbed, too, over the searching survey they made; they wished to take their full time at it; they wished to see, not how much better the place would have been had it been of this sort and of that, but whether, taking the property as it actually existed, they could contrive to fit it to their use. And by and by, when it was decided that measurements might be made to agree, and that it was possible the price and terms

could be adjusted, there came a flush of hope and earnestness in the husband's cheeks, there was a tremor in the voice of the nice young wife, and clear tears were over-filling her eyes. It was to be accounted for, it came out, afterwards. It had happened, in the old courting days, before marriage had come, that this young couple had ever and anon strolled by this very house, always declaring it was the place their ambition would lead them to, if ever they had the means. And as the means had since been accumulated, and the house was empty, they had come to it now, they were satisfied and gave satisfaction, and it became their own.

Which is a pretty and pleasant fact, as the last fact to be mentioned relative to *A Shop to Let*.

FORTUNES MADE IN BUSINESS.

X.

THE ROMANCE OF INVENTION : HENRY BESSEMER.

WHAT is romance and what are knights-errant, and have we got either now? Many will be able to answer that there was an age of Arthurian romance, but that the reading of its lucubrations as a serious business was knocked on the head by Don Quixote. As to chivalry, knights and gentlemen were doomed by railways, and the last of these personages is on his way to the British Museum or Madame Tussaud's.

Such is the common belief; but who knows? Amadis de Gaul and the Four Sons of Aymon may no longer be read; but has not the Poet Laureate put new song and new life into the *mort d'Arthur*, made artists paint its scenes and his, and given a new popular acceptance to the phantom-forms of the Round Table? Not a young lady here or in our other English world beyond the Atlantic sea, but has wept at the sorrows of the queens and damsels, and has made darlings of the knights, like dolls for girls out of pinafores to make love to, in their daydreams.

Although St. George's-day had ceased until this year to be a living festival in merry England, although its war-cry had become dumb, and the red cross of St. George, which 'braved, a thousand years, the battle and the breeze,' no longer waves aloft, all is not dead. The boys here read the Seven Champions of Christendom, the English immigrants in Canada and the United States keep St. George's-day in earnestness, and they and their wives and daugh-

ters wear roses on that day, as do the Fifth Fusiliers. St. George is coming to life, and none dare say but that all the Seven Champions will soon be afoot.

Romance never died in England, it lives with the breath of the men and boys, and even of the women. Look at that young mother and her slender sister, out in the wilderness of Queensland or Natal or New Zealand or Vancouver, minding the lonely hut at home, and while the men are far afield, driving or fighting the naked or half-naked blacks. Yet these women went through life but tamely at home; for there was no such call upon them. Shakespeare is but the echo of the trumpets of romance, and his histories on the stage are but its embodiment awakening the people even to this day.

The *Pilgrim's Progress* owes much of its popularity to its adventures, struggles, and fights with the embodied powers of darkness. To descend to the childish Jack the Giant-Killer and Jack and the Beanstalk, these have never been displaced. In the greed for such things they are sought beyond an English shape, and the *Arabian Nights* charm youth in their abridgment, and older folk in all the maturity of text and enrichment of notes, with which the great Oriental scholar Lane has endowed them. All these creations of imagination live in the popular mind in company with what is their great exemplar, Robinson Crusoe. It

is idle to say Crusoe is not an historical personage, and is only a fiction, and not even a legend. Crusoe is the Englishman, even to his setting forth on his last voyage in later life.

We may, if we like, entertain a doubt whether Crusoe was really born in Yorkshire in the year cited; but we go on practically giving faith to all the main story. It was not that Defoe was so cunning a writer, but that we are ever ready to believe him. We may not be over-curious either about the Giant Blunderbore, or as to what order or genus of dragon St. George killed, and whether the brute was graminivorous or carnivorous; but whatever the world may discuss, we give about as good credence to these tales as we do to many articles of our faith.

All this is no digression, but a way of getting home to facts, which we may not so readily understand if we look at them dryly, as delineated by what is called common sense, and what is often common nonsense, when offered as a representation to the body of mankind. We want our readers to contemplate the giants, dragons, magicians, and enchantments which are to be met with in this daily life of England in the nineteenth century, and what manner of men those must be who combat with them.

We understand the men who stood at bay at Rorke's Drift; we understand the captain of the merchantman who, having seen every woman to the boats, stands on the deck as sinks the doomed ship. All these, and the many deeds of heroism which shine in an otherwise degenerate age, we can comprehend because there is physical danger in them, and there are crowds, and there is the sudden flash of light and life.

We do not bring so vividly to our minds the man in the black coat who but now passed us in the street, or who, for that matter, is our neighbour in a near house. We do not apprehend how he, at the peril of brain and life, has undergone privations and hardships and anxieties and disappointments; how he has passed through the wreckage of life in the contest with what are truly the monstrous powers of darkness, and has come forth, like the paladin of old, the hero of his country, and the benefactor of mankind.

The cool determined courage which must man him who, in a good cause, will combat with the apathy of the learned and the vulgar, the ignorance of a government department, and the corrupt obstructiveness of English law, must be in no degree inferior to those qualities which, under the charm of the poet, we accept as the highest characteristics of the brave and illustrious knight. This has been brought home to our reflections many a time, but not the less forcibly by some passages in the life of Henry Bessemer which have latterly either come before the public or have reawakened our remembrance. He is only one of many men of his kind, though it is but seldom we get at the inner life of such, and in this case by the mere chance of controversy.

We may very fairly say that in naming Henry Bessemer it is not at all likely that many of our readers will know whom we mean, and yet each one has derived some personal advantage from him. There will, however, be a number who by some chance have heard of Bessemer steel; but what Bessemer is, or rather who, whether a machine or a man, dead or alive, is another thing. There is an enormous quantity of Bessemer

iron and steel all over the world, and it is quite a new thing.

Now the most common way of doing justice to this author of a great invention is, to give a technical description of the iron manufacture, and to show in what the improvements consist. Beyond this may be enumerated the great benefits which this new industry has conferred on the country, and what are our obligations to him who introduced it. This is not our meaning now; but to leave the whole of these matters aside, and to accept the invention as the world has done as an acknowledged success, and to deal rather with the man in what is in effect the romance of life, not the romance of daring on the distant sea, not that which will gain the Victoria Cross in far-off battle, but the chivalric struggle against obstacles and difficulties which may and must be fought out by the mind of man even in the very midst of our homes.

The scientific papers are now ardent in the advocacy of original research, and the student who reads has before him visions of honour and glory, fellowships, professorships, honours, decorations, medals, stars, the homage of the great, the veneration of the public, and long-lasting glory, if not immortality. If, however, the student values his own peace of mind, he will think narrowly before he ventures on the quest of the Sangrail in original research, for the rarer his inventions the greater will be his peril. Few think of this and fewer know it. What the student may do with safety and with profit is to hang on to the skirts of some popular man or accepted authority, illustrate his doctrines, but most carefully avoid correcting or confuting him. Then, by the time the doctrines of the great authority have

gone their way, and lost their newness, and been found out in their untruthness, the votary of science in such wise will have acquired the honour and glory and rewards which the successful in research had yearned for, and have not got. It may be allowable perhaps, to alter the shape of the hook in a mousetrap, or to show the chemical rationale of toasting the cheese in a more recondite fashion; but woe to the man who does away with mouse-traps, thwarts the mousetrap users, and spoils the trade of the mousetrap maker!

A man may flatter himself by rare examples, that by a great and successful invention he may himself succeed and realise a large fortune. There are such cases, but there are others, and one of Bessemer's predecessors, J. B. Heath, is one of them. Setting other interesting parts of his career in India and here aside, Heath invented a cast or silver steel process, which enabled the Sheffield manufacturers to overcome their foreign rivals, and make silver steel and superior qualities of steel. Thus the price of the article was reduced twenty pounds per ton, and Heath's stipulated reward was one pound per ton out of the twenty he saved. He was fully successful, so the steel manufacturers combined to oust him of his pittance, as they said they did not see why he should take their money. Thus he was plunged in that fearful and costly litigation which characterises English law-courts, and his claim was held to be invalid, because the manufacturers had adopted an invention of Heath's own not embraced in that patent. It will be seen that Bessemer was served by the Government after the same fashion.

Heath's fortune was absorbed

in experiments and lawyers' fees, and he died ruined and broken-hearted. Had he lived a few years longer it is neither impossible nor improbable that the judges would have altered the law in another way, as from time to time they do. His case is only one out of too many.

Where Henry Bessemer was born, and when, may be looked for in *Men of the Time* and the biographical dictionaries. We have, however, something of his early life given by himself in reference to a vindication he was driven to make. At the age of eighteen, having been born in a small country village in Hertfordshire (on the 19th January 1813) of a respectable family, he came to London, 'knowing no one, and no one knowing me. A mere cipher in this vast sea of human enterprise.' His studious habits and love of invention soon gained a footing for him, and at twenty he found himself finishing a model he had invented of taking copies from antique and modern basso-relievos in a manner which enabled him to stamp them on cardboard, thus producing thousands of embossed copies of the highest works of art at a small cost. Notwithstanding the trivial cost, some of these productions are to be found in the hands of curious collectors, to whom the beauty of the novel workmanship commended them. A fine medal of George IV. is among these.

The facility with which the young Bessemer could make a permanent die, even from a thin paper original, capable of producing a thousand copies, would have opened a wide door to successful fraud, if his process had been known to unscrupulous persons; for there is not a government stamp or the paper seal of a corporate body that every common

office-clerk could not forge in a few minutes at the cost of a penny, at the office of his employer or his own home. The public knowledge of such a means of forging would at that time have shattered the whole system of H.M. Stamp Office, had Mr. Bessemer allowed a knowledge of his method to escape. Mr. Bessemer's straightforward mind leads him to speak of what would have been the consequences of his 'incautiousness.'

Some of our readers will here think we are leading them astray, as Sir Lancelot of the Lake is not expected to be found in a workshop; but this is quite a mistake, for a knight should be proficient in all arts useful to mankind, and necessarily in engineering. The correctness of our delineation will, however, be proved by the successive adventures and the temper of the adventurer. Some will consider there was simplicity in Henry Bessemer; but it was the single-mindedness of a high character and of great genius above the petty arts of mean man. No sooner had the fact dawned on him of the danger to the commonwealth than he began to consider if some new stamp could be devised to prevent so serious a mischief. While so engaged he found out that the Government were themselves aware that they were losers to a great amount by the transfer of stamps from old deeds to new skins of parchment, a transfer of old lamps for new ones, to the great detriment of Aladdin.

Having got to a knowledge of the facts and how the frauds were committed, Bessemer thought that he was able to appreciate the importance of any system of stamps that would prevent so great a loss to the Government; 'Nor did I,' says he, 'for one mo-

ment doubt that the Government would amply reward me if I were successful in so doing;' and thus would most persons, not knowing H.M. Government, also think.

After some months of study and experiment, which he cheerfully undertook, although it interfered considerably with the pursuit of the business by which he lived, inasmuch as it was necessary to carry on the experiments in the strictest secrecy, and at night, at length he succeeded in making his stamp. He knew nothing then, he said, of patents; and if he had for a moment have thought it necessary to make any preliminary conditions with the Government of his native country, he would at once have scouted the idea as utterly unworthy. He lives to know better; but in his then confidence he wended his way one morning to Somerset House, and was ushered into the presence of the chief, Sir Charles Presley. Sir Charles told him that the officer reckoned the loss by the frauds then perpetrated as being not less than one hundred thousand pounds per annum.

Sir Charles Presley was very much astonished at what Bessemer had shown and communicated, and asked him to call again in a few days. This he did, and Sir Charles suggested that he should work out the principle of his invention more fully, which Bessemer was very glad to do. He then produced the first perforating stamp, now so common, which could not be transferred by fraud. The design gave great satisfaction to Sir Charles Presley and his brethren, and everything went on smoothly. Sir Charles consulted Lord Althorp, and the Stamp Office authorities determined to adopt it.

Bessemer was then asked if, instead of receiving a sum of money

from the Treasury, he would be satisfied with the position of Superintendent of Stamps at some 600*l.* or 800*l.* per annum. All this showed that great care and love of economy of the first Reform Ministry, and all ministries, Tory and Liberal; but in truth they preferred the salary, because, had they proposed to the House of Commons the payment of a sum of 5000*l.* down to save 100,000*l.* or more yearly, their Tory opponents, in their turn, would have duly commented on the scandalous waste of public money. The proposed appointment was, however, all that he could desire, and, in the simplicity of his heart, great was his rejoicing over the prospect before him; for he was at that time engaged to be married, and his future position in life seemed thus assured.

Our lady-readers will now see that our view of these events is correct; for here we come to the lady of the knight's love, and some of them may think of the career of the beloved of a great inventor or real man of science. How much must be her satisfaction to find as years go on the growing glory of her husband, which casts lustre on her and on their children! Even a young lady will cease to grudge the evenings to be taken away from parties and from trifles for nobler pursuits; nay, even the nights, which, as Bessemer said, 'must sometimes be devoted to produce that which shall shine forth in the bright blaze of many a day.' Henry Bessemer's betrothed, who was the sole confidante of his high endeavours, might well picture all these things to herself, and how, in after-years, she would share in his titles, and lean on the arm of him who was covered with the ensigns of honour his grateful country would bestow. She

might think she would be invited to great gatherings, to state balls, and to state concerts with him. The fate of such a woman, who has been the sharer in her husband's anxieties, and oftentimes his helpmate in his labours, is in after-times to share in his disappointments, to feel more than he does the slights inflicted on him, to know him deprived of the reward of his own labours, and to find those who have profited by them basking in the sunshine.

As Bessemer narrates, a few days after what he deemed was the great success of their lives, he called on the young lady to whom he was engaged, and showed her the new stamp. She, who with woman's quickness had learned to watch each detail like himself, said, 'Yes, I understand this; but surely, if all stamps had a date put upon them, they could not at a future time be used again without detection.' This was indeed a new light, and as he owned greatly startled him; but he at the time told her the steel dies used for the purpose could have but one date engraved upon them. After a little consideration he saw that movable dates were by no means impossible, so he effected this; and he saw clearly that this plan would be most simple and efficient, far better than the elaborate scheme he had devised. He could not but confess that 'while he felt pleased and proud of the clever and simple suggestion of the young lady, he saw also that all his more elaborate system, the result of months of toil, was shattered to pieces by it.'

It was not unnatural that he feared to disturb the decision Sir Charles Presley had come to; but with his strong conviction of the advantages of the new plan he felt in honour bound not to suppress it, whatever might be the

result. Thus it was that he soon found himself again closeted with Sir Charles at Somerset House, discussing the new scheme, which Sir Charles much preferred, because, as he said, all the old dies, old presses, and old workmen could be employed, and there would be but little change in the office, so little in fact that no new superintendent of stamps was required. So, after due consideration, Mr. Bessemer's first plan was definitively abandoned, the new one adopted, and in six or eight weeks an Act of Parliament was passed to carry it out.

During all the bustle of this great change, which, in the inventor's lifetime even to now, has saved at least five millions of money, and for anything we know even ten millions or more, no steps had been taken to instal him in office. Lord Althorp had resigned, and, as Bessemer says, no one seemed to have authority to do anything for him. In his own words, all sorts of half promises and excuses, or, in other terms, lies, followed each other, with long delays between, and he gradually saw the whole thing sliding out of his grasp. The fruit of his trustfulness was this—that he could not go to law, even if he wished to do so; for he was reminded by one of the imps of romance, the lawyer to the Stamp Office, when he pressed for mere money out of pocket, that he had done all the work voluntarily, and of his own accord. The fact that the Stamp Office was profiting by his toil and outlay weighed not the least with lawyers and officials, but they added mockery and insult to injury.

Wearied and disgusted he at length ceased to waste time in calling at the Stamp Office. He was made of sterner stuff than to give way to this grievous disap-

pointment, and in those days, the time, of which he had bestowed nine months on the service of H.M. Government, besides toil and expenditure, was precious to him, and he felt that nothing but increased exertions could make up for the loss. Thus, sad and dispirited, and with a burning sense of injustice overpowering all other feelings, he went his way from the Stamp Office, too proud to ask as a favour what was indubitably his just right, and sought consolation with that true heart with which his life has been shared.

Though nearly half a century has since elapsed, neither H.M. Government, on either side of politics, nor the six hundred and fifty members of the Legislature have ever felt their consciences stirred to pay him one shilling or give him any acknowledgment. On the contrary, he has had more than one adventure with H.M. Government, on which, in the liberal spirit of chivalry, he has bestowed more than one boon, reaping no reward but insolence and ingratitude.

The boy beginning life had learned one lesson, which had become a necessity for his good. He kept his embossing process to himself, and to this day the secret has been carefully guarded. Further, he invented at an after-time another process of great value in the arts, which reduced the price of an article much used. This too he determined to keep a secret; so he devised that the essential part of the manufacture should be conducted by self-acting machinery, to which no one should have access but himself. Thus, while in the outer part any common workman could be employed, he prepared an inner department. For this, having planned the machinery, he had the several

parts made in three or four establishments, and when they were delivered on the premises he fitted them up with one relative privately at night.

This is one of the most remarkable incidents in the annals of industry—the fast-locked chamber, holding within its unseen and mysterious monster at work by day or by night, while the mechanics who laboured without its door, and looked on it, could not penetrate within. Even the eldest son of Mr. Bessemer had reached manhood before he ever went within the forbidden chamber or held its key.

The materials were cheap, the demand for the manufactured article steady, and a high price for it has been maintained, from which Mr. Bessemer has realised a handsome fortune, though small in comparison with the earnings of his greater inventions.

It will have been noticed that even a man so liberal has felt it useful to his interests to conceal two inventions from the public. This is a not uncommon practice; for the Patent Laws protect the lawyers rather than the inventors, and turn the hard earnings of honest industry into the coffers of these pests of the commonwealth. A great invention has too many times brought nothing but ruin to its originator; and he who escapes the meshes of the law owes it rather to his luck than to any operation of justice, law and justice having no necessary connection. It was but a few days ago a case was recorded, in which a patent for an explosive largely used in mining industry, having been declared valid by a court of law, was by a higher court of law declared invalid, because the unlearned judges did not understand how they could manufacture blasting powder under the speci-

tion. Luckily the highest court decided for the validity of the patent, inasmuch as practical men had tested it, where lawyers had undertaken to manufacture what they did not understand.

A chemical process which can be worked as a secret is never disclosed; for the moment it is known, patent or no patent, every rascal can undersell the inventor, and is abetted by the courts of law in so doing, besides the unfair competition to which he is subjected by the foreign pirate. The consequence is serious prejudice to public interests; for invention is the fruitful mother of invention, and the practical knowledge of such secret processes would afford an example for other valuable applications.

Indeed, in England the action of the Government, as representing the community, is most unfavourable to the inventor and man of science. As the main body of society are not inventive and are not engaged in original research, they do not experience the action in their own personal fortunes. On the contrary, they do not conceive what really takes place, because so many and so distinguished are the noble acts of individuals in England that we never contemplate there can be anything wrong or rotten in our constitution. By a noble discovery or a great improvement we not only experience some actual benefit, but we all feel proud of the lustre thrown on our country. Such being our feeling, we naturally think that the public authorities, as representing us, do what is right towards those who have rendered services to all. We believe, without looking closely, that our representatives or salaried officers gladly render every help from the public resources in aid of meritorious labours, nor can we

doubt that rewards profusely distributed to some must also reach the right men.

Strangely enough, such is not the real working of our institutions; and without any covert intentions to that end, the man of merit becomes exposed to all that the ignorance, neglect, envy, jealousy, chicanery, and jobbery of mean minds can effect. It is not that the majority of our public men are so influenced; but there is a strange apathy, and for want of direct intervention their subordinates are allowed to act a most malevolent part. The experiences of Mr. Bessemer show that the participation of great men in the Government did not obtain for him justice, gratitude, or fair play. Indeed, many of our departments are notorious for their conduct. The Admiralty has always been a laggard behind the merchant service in the adoption of improvement. It last of all took up chain cables, iron rigging, steam-engines, screw-propellers, and iron hulls. As to the Ordnance Department, from that it has ever been almost impossible to obtain justice, and so throughout. Even if one officer does a friendly turn, his rival or successor—and his successor is most commonly his rival—upsets all that has been done.

Hence, if a young man is either of meaner parts or wanting in the noble characteristics of a great man, early in life he arrives at a decision to follow a safer course. If, instead of distinguishing himself as a scholar, he will apply himself to teach little boys Latin grammar, he may get stipends of from four hundred to a thousand a year, and look forward to a head-mastership with seven thousand. Whether the boys learn is another story. A professor is always better paid than a philosopher, and

f
v
t
v
T
s
m
th
h
fo
w
th
in
ne
leg
me
ha
in
pre
all
to
bec
nes
suc
bro
Thu
und
but
wha

many a great man must waste valuable time in the drudgery of teaching boys and lads, in order to earn a livelihood. Much of the great work of science in all branches is done by unpaid labour, at the expense and outlay of the student himself; and should any rare public appointment fall vacant in his branch, so far from getting it, he will find that it is given to some German *protégé* of the Court, or to some partisan jobber. The statistical departments have been disorganised for years through a writer of political articles receiving the honours and emoluments of the direction.

Bessemer says it appears strange that he should for so many years have remained silent under the unjust treatment he had received from the Stamp Office; for these facts were only made public this very year of 1879, and so late that few beyond himself and his wife are alive to authenticate them. The fact was, that besides the time unprofitably devoted for several months to the Government service, and the cost even of the dies and of the experiments he had made not having been paid for by the Government, he was well-nigh ruined on the very threshold of life. Thus it became impossible for him to take the necessary steps to force his legal claims against the Government, and in which he would have found very great difficulties in the protection insured to the prerogative of the Crown. Indeed, all his energy was necessary to recover lost ground; and he became more immersed in business, and one invention rapidly succeeded another, and happily brought with them a rich return. Thus, deeply engrossed in new undertakings, he had no time and but little inclination to re-open what he justly calls this bitterly

vexatious subject with the Stamp Office. He was, however, destined to come again in contact with his ancient enemies of H.M. Government in more than one way, but in all equally unsatisfactory to him. At the time of the Crimean war he had invented a mode of firing elongated projectiles from a smooth-bore gun, the rotation necessary to insure their proper position during flight being obtained without rifling the gun, consequently rendering all smooth-bore guns at once suitable for firing elongated shot and shell. Notwithstanding the treatment he had received, as an Englishman it was a matter of course with him to offer this plan to our Government; but though it came from a man then an accredited inventor and engineer, almost as a matter of course it was discarded without a trial.

Being shortly after in Paris at a dinner, Bessemer met Prince Napoleon, and in conversation told him of his plan for utilising smoothbore guns. The Prince was so impressed with the importance of this idea that he said he was sure his cousin, the Emperor, would be much pleased if Bessemer would explain his invention to him, and that he would get an appointment made with the Emperor for that purpose. This was done, and Bessemer had a long and most interesting discussion with the Emperor, whom he naturally found thoroughly conversant with the whole subject of artillery.

The despot of France in the freest manner gave him *carte blanche* to make any experiments he desired at the Government establishment of Vincennes. Soon after, however, finding his presence was much required in London, he obtained another audience of the Emperor, and asked leave to make

the experimental projectiles in London, and to bring them over to Paris for trial. To this the Emperor readily acceded, and as he was leaving the audience chamber, he said, 'In this case you will be put to some expense, but I will have that seen to.' Fancy Sir Charles Presley and his brethren saying anything of this kind! The French Emperor, however, did not need to be reminded; for a few days after Bessemer's return to London he received a letter from the Duke of Bassano, enclosing an autograph note from the Emperor, giving a credit on Messrs. Baring Brothers for cost of manufacturing projectiles, but without naming the amount, leaving it absolutely to the discretion of Bessemer, in full reliance on his honour. What would my Lords of the Treasury or the Audit Office have said to such a document as this? And yet this is what a private firm in London would have done, Messrs. Baring Brothers themselves, in like circumstances. Twenty years after the Peninsular war the great victor Wellington was made to pay five thousand pounds by the Audit Office for an account of the war, for which there was not a technical voucher. Bessemer made a great many projectiles, which were tried in his presence at the Polygon at Vincennes, a few days before New Year's-day with six inches of snow on the ground, which enabled them readily to find the projectiles on their passing through the targets. The course of these experiments was very interesting, and in them Bessemer displayed great ingenuity. He did not neglect the opportunity of proving that the confident tone in which his system had been condemned at Woolwich was entirely misplaced.

The gun used for these experi-

ments was only a light cast-iron one, and Commander Minnie, to whom the conduct of the experiments was intrusted, said, 'Yes, the shots rotate properly; but if we cannot get something stronger for our guns, these heavy projectiles will be of little service.' At that time the projectiles were 30-pounders fired from a 12-pounder gun. The casual observation was the spark that has kindled one of the greatest industrial revolutions which the present century has yet to record; for it forced on Bessemer the idea that the improvement of iron for guns was a subject well worth investigation, and held out promises of important results. When iron guns were first cast at the Carron Works in Scotland in the last century, the business was a very small one, and it must not be omitted that H.M.'s Government of that time did not forget to put impediments in their way. When Bessemer reported to the Emperor a few days later the result of the Vincennes experiments, he said that he had made up his mind to study the whole subject of metals specially suitable for artillery purposes. This proposal the Emperor encouraged with many kind expressions, and a desire that he might be informed of the results arrived at.

It will be of interest to the reader to learn that, according to Bessemer's statement, his knowledge of iron metallurgy was at that time very limited, so that he had to get up the whole of the subject. He is now, however, of opinion that his ignorance proved of great advantage to him, as he had very little to unlearn, and could thus approach the subject free from the bias inseparable from those who have long followed a beaten track and vainly endeavour to get out of the rut. These

words of Bessemer require, however, to be carefully considered. He does not imply that a state of ignorance would enable him to invent as many schemers imagine, who put forth crude ideas which are crushed by practical men. He set to work to learn the whole business thoroughly, first from books and then in the foundries. Still it will be seen that here was a man well on in the world, who set himself to hard learning, while many of us think that we can do very well without learning at all, or without learning any more.

To the public who thus get details at first hand, it is also of interest to know that, having built a small experimental iron-works in St. Pancras, and begun his preliminary trials, months rolled on, and he spared neither labour nor money, but made failure after failure. To the wise man, however, failure is a way of learning, and failures are carefully recorded, first, because they show us the way how to save our time by not trying the failure over again; secondly, because they show us, through narrowing the field, in what way we must try; and thirdly, because they in themselves often suggest some further experiment. Bessemer, indeed, says that during this long time of failure he was accumulating many important facts which could not but ultimately be of value to him.

Thus by slow degrees the truth began to dawn upon him; and at the end of about a year he had considerably improved the quality of cast iron, and had then cast a small model gun, which he turned and bored. The metal was almost as white as steel, and was very much tougher and stronger than the best cast iron then in use for artillery purposes. This small gun he took to Paris, and presented to his friend the Emperor, as

the first-fruits of his practical studies in iron metallurgy. He says he shall ever remember with respect and gratitude the Emperor's kindly expressions when accepting it. It is a thing to ponder on that a usurper should be thus regarded, while the government of a free country heaps on itself contempt and hostility. It may be that, where party government prevails, principle is little regarded, while despotism must secure itself against public opinion. The only decent English Government perhaps that ever existed, except the Commonwealth, was that of the company of merchants which ruled the East Indies, but that was in truth a despotism. As to the United States, they are not worse than the mother country; for this year, by a party vote, they have displaced one of the finest scientific establishments they have to boast of. Under a free government national vanity may sometimes foster a noble design, but the fears of the despot keep his conscience in a tenderer state.

On his return from Paris, Bessemer followed up his experiments with greater ardour than ever, for he became convinced he was on the eve of producing the quality of metal more suitable than any other. Furnace after furnace was pulled down and rebuilt, new and improved machinery and apparatus were invented and constructed at a great expense, and several new patents were taken out, so as to secure each step in advance. Thus even the then handsome resources of Bessemer were weakened by these prolonged and fearfully expensive experiments, which were by this time necessarily conducted on a manufacturing scale, but without return, and not as mere laboratory experiments. He and his wife

saw the results of their past years' labour going in this way, and that they were returning to an earlier condition of their lives. They bore it, however, cheerfully, for Bessemer now saw the great fact that the refinement of iron in the fluid state might go on until pure malleable iron or steel could be obtained. He had thereby got to a further stage, for he knew that such a result in its importance went infinitely beyond that for which he had been striving, an ordnance metal.

How many a squire will spend on a pack of hounds or on a stud of race-horses, and how will a bankrupt duchess bestow on an evening entertainment to a crowd of idlers for which not a wreck will be found on the morrow, sums which in any department of science would yield results of lasting utility. Here, however, were a man and his wife—for the wife had been partner in every toil of life—bestowing their earnings and savings on what was for the good of their country, but might yield them no more than a ball does to a duchess, perhaps only faded flowers and the memory of regret.

At this time of his life Mr. Bessemer devoted himself exclusively to his iron experiments, and had greatly neglected his professional business for some two years and a half. Although he had a valued partner, Mr. Robert Longsdon, he considered the state of business was not fair and he offered to withdraw altogether from the partnership, or to give him a share of a fifth of the new patents. Fortunately for Mr. Longsdon he was as free-minded as Mr. Bessemer, and he took the well-meant offer. Meanwhile Bessemer went on; and in August 1856 he felt justified in reading a paper before the British

Association 'on the manufacture of malleable iron and steel without fuel.'

The whole iron trade of England was startled by the facts set forth in this paper, backed by samples of the work. Many of the leading men in the iron trade came up forthwith to London in great haste, fearing he might make some exclusive bargains with a few firms for the working of his invention. With a full knowledge that as yet there had been no commercial working of the process, yet as a sort of insurance against a possible monopoly, they took licenses on the favourable terms then offered. Thus no less than 27,000*l.* was brought in within thirty days of his reading his paper at Cheltenham. These licenses Bessemer afterwards bought back for 31,500*l.*, giving fresh licenses in their stead.

The consequences of this eagerness were very noteworthy: numerous temporary experimental trials were made in different parts of the country with various qualities of pig-iron, showing that most of them could not be successfully worked with the new process. No sooner was this found out than an extraordinary revulsion of feeling showed itself in the iron-trade, and perfect distrust of the invention became universal. The public press, which had at first spoken of it in such glowing terms, now doomed it as impracticable, and spoke of it as 'a brilliant meteor that had flitted across the metallurgical horizon, dazzling a few enthusiasts, and then vanishing for ever in total darkness.'

Although Bessemer knew he was in the right way, he knew too this was no time to argue the question with the iron-masters; words were of no avail, so he set earnestly to work to try and overcome the difficulty which had so

unexpectedly arisen, and that was no easy task. All the old investigations had to be gone over again, experiments had to be made on a much larger scale, with greater and more powerful machinery. To add to the trouble, as the difficulties had reference more to chemical than to mechanical questions, so a laboratory was fitted up, and the services of a professor of chemistry were engaged at a high salary.

Mr. Bessemer owns that the very large scale on which these operations were carried out involved a very heavy outlay in various ways; but there was no slackening of exertion, no cessation of the severe mental and bodily labour. In this way another long and weary year had passed, and but little real progress had been made towards the removal of the difficulty. Many new paths had been struck out, but they had led to no practical results.

He worked steadily on. Six months more of anxious toil had glided away, and things were much in the same state, except that many thousands of pounds had been uselessly spent, and he was much worn by hard work and mental anxiety. The time had now come, to use his own words, when the large fortune that was almost within his grasp seemed then far off. His name as an engineer and inventor had suffered much by the defeat of his plans. His best friends tried, first by gentle hints, and then by stronger arguments, to make him desist from a pursuit that all the world had proclaimed to be utterly impossible. He owns it was a hard struggle, and he had well-nigh learned to distrust himself, and was fain at times to surrender his own convictions to the mere opinion of others. Those most near and dear to him at

length grieved over his obstinate persistence; but, as he says, what else could he do, for he had irrefragable evidence of the absolute truth and soundness of the principle on which his invention was based. With this knowledge he could not persuade himself to fling away the promise of wealth and fame, and lose entirely the results of years of labour and mental anxiety, and at the same time own himself to be beaten and defeated.

His courage held on, and happily for him the end was near; and in a few more months he had fully succeeded in producing steel worth 50*l.* to 60*l.* per ton from charcoal pig-iron, which had cost him only 7*l.* per ton; the conversion of the crude iron into steel being effected by simply forcing minute streams of cold atmospheric air through it for the space of fifteen minutes—so plain was the ultimate process after years of toil. Thus was he able to boast that the so-called fallacious dream of the enthusiast had been realised to its fullest extent, and it was now his turn to triumph over those who had so confidently foretold his failure. He could then see in his mind's eye, at a glance, the great iron industry of the world crumbling away under the irresistible force of the facts so recently elicited. The ingenuity and skill of a hundred and fifty years in building up the English iron trade were as naught; for homogeneous steel was to become the material for the construction of our ships and our guns, our viaducts and our bridges, our railways and our locomotives, and the thousand and one things for which iron had theretofore been employed.

He straightway took a few hundredweight of these new steel bars to the works of his friends, the Galloways, at Manchester, and

unknown to their workpeople these bars were given out for all the purposes for which steel had been used. So identical was the new steel, that during two months the workmen had not the smallest suspicion they were not using steel of the best mark, costing 60*l.* per ton.

Even after this not one of the large steel manufacturers of Sheffield would willingly adopt his process, though each one was ready to accept for himself an absolute monopoly of the invention, and then perhaps have shut it up. Bessemer, who had foreseen this, was driven to set up steel works of his own in the midst of Sheffield, and to undersell them in their own market. Thus were established the first Bessemer steel works, open to the inspection of the manufacturers, and from which steel was produced and sold 10*l.* to 15*l.* per ton below their prices. It is not unnatural that Bessemer should congratulate himself and his new partners on having escaped rattening with a bottle of gunpowder in the furnace-flues, for which Sheffield men have made themselves so disgracefully known. The reason he gives is the absolute disbelief of both masters and men that Bessemer could compete with them. It was this disbelief, however, that in the end lost Sheffield its old monopoly of the steel trade of the country, for the process was adopted in all the great iron districts.

Fourteen years afterwards these experimental works were sold for exactly twenty-four times the whole subscribed capital of the firm, after returning fifty-seven fold. Therefore the whole return in fourteen years was eighty fold, or cent per cent every two months, more than a gigantic Californian silver mine.

His old acquaintances in the Government were kept fully in-

formed of what he was about; for the late Colonel (afterwards General) Eardley Wilmot visited Sheffield on their behalf, and made himself master of the process. So far as he was concerned, he always behaved straightforward.

In May 1859 Bessemer read a paper on his invention at the Institution of Civil Engineers. By this time the process had spread into Sweden and France.

Woolwich, however, held to its reputation of the enemy of inventors. In consequence of an experiment there, the success of which could not be denied, Bessemer was requested to send in a tender and estimate for the cost of the necessary converting apparatus for making steel for ordnance at a cost of 6*l.* or 7*l.* per ton. One of the usual changes at Woolwich took place—Colonel Wilmot was superseded.

Bessemer finding matters going wrong appealed to the late Mr. Sidney Herbert, who at length very coolly stated that he had consulted Mr. W. G. Armstrong, who had said Bessemer's iron was wholly unsuited for the purpose. Is it to be wondered at that Bessemer could hardly believe his own ears; Mr. Armstrong being the proposer of a rival scheme for making guns of coiled iron bars; and the two methods of forming the gun not being able to bear comparison, still less a competitive trial? Bessemer thinks that the Newcastle manufacturer well provided for his own interest in the advice he gave, for he was at once promoted to office with a large salary, and honoured by knighthood at the outset in 1859, receiving the profits of large orders executed for Government at his own works at Newcastle.

Bessemer of course was not knighted, and Sir William Arm-

strong was forced to adopt steel for the foundation and core on which his gun was built. This was a practical answer to the affirmation that steel was wholly unsuited for Woolwich purposes.

Undismayed by this proceeding and encouraged by the adoption of his process by Sir John Brown of Sheffield, Sir Joseph Whitworth, the great German engineer Mr. Krupp, and others, Bessemer prepared at the great Exhibition of 1862 to show its applicability to all purposes of iron or steel. It may be mentioned that what is called Whitworth steel is made by the Bessemer system. During the Exhibition the late Mr. Platt, M.P., of Oldham, offered Bessemer 50,000*l.* for a fifth-part of his patents as a sum down. Bessemer, desirous of securing himself, accepted this, and so far as we can make out Mr. Platt and his partners must have received at least a quarter of a million for their fifth.

At the Exhibition of Paris of 1867, Bessemer, out of delicacy to the French manufacturers, who had adopted his system, declined to exhibit any article of his own manufacture. Notwithstanding his not being an exhibitor, the French Commissioners reported to the Emperor that the great progress of the iron manufacture in the preceding ten years was due to the persevering efforts of the English engineer. The Emperor had not forgotten his friend and the old experiments, and he expressed his intention to confer on Bessemer the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour. Unluckily he put a usual condition, that the consent of the English Government should be given.

Mr. Bessemer made the necessary application to the English Ambassador in Paris, by whom permission was at once refused,

and so was a second application. Thus not only did H.M. Government neglect to confer honours on Bessemer, but stood in the way of others rewarding him. It is strange the French Emperor should have allowed himself to be so thwarted. At the previous Exhibition the French Government had expressed its intention to offer the Legion of Honour to the English exhibitors as to the others; but Prince Napoleon was surprised to find the odd attitude taken by the English Government, for he was aware they conferred decorations on people of their own destitute of any merit. He, however, took the opinion of an English man of science then in Paris, who told him that if the Legion of Honour were given to the English it would be accepted. The distribution accordingly took place, when some of the English in their cunning carried their crosses to the Ambassador, and asked if they could wear them. He good-naturedly told them not to inquire of him, and they have worn their decorations to this day. At the Exhibition of last year H.M. Government again attempted to prevent the English exhibitors from receiving the same rewards as the others, but were compelled to give way to public opinion. Some ridicule was attempted to be thrown upon the wearers; but surely it must be better for a manufacturer of warming-pans to receive the Legion of Honour than for a head-footman, or some one whose function at Court is little more than to carry a warming-pan, to be created C.B., K.C.B., or G.C.B., with the Cross of St. Michael and St. George in addition.

This gratuitous act of insult naturally revives in Bessemer's mind all the bitterness of the long-smothered wrongs inflicted

on him by the Government when he was but a defenceless boy. It is to the expression of these feelings that we owe the personal revelations of Mr. Bessemer's struggles with life, such as are rarely made known, and which offer a picture of so much interest. Often the life of a man of science presents no such incidents, but is confined to a dry list of his works or his discoveries.

However, the great inventor could afford to look with contempt on his pitiful adversaries. From the period of the French Exhibition his process rapidly spread throughout Europe and America, and it is wonderful to contemplate its growth. At the time of his invention, the whole make of cast steel in England with all the advantages of Heath's process was only about 50,000 tons yearly, at prices ranging from 50*l.* to 60*l.* per ton. This price was prohibitory for all structural purposes, for which, besides, the brittle nature of what was then known as cast steel made it unsuitable.

Mr. Bessemer remembers that when he first proposed steel for use as rails to Mr. Ramsbottom, then engineer of the London and North-Western Railway, the latter asked, in a fierce tone, if Bessemer wanted him tried for manslaughter. Now steel rails are being laid throughout the world wherever iron rails are worn out, at less than the original cost of these.

In 1877, notwithstanding the depressions of trade, the manufacture of Bessemer steel here was not less than 750,000 tons, at a cost of about 10*l.* per ton. Thus the make had grown fifteen-fold in a limited interval. The cost of the 50,000 tons was 2,500,000*l.* and of fifteen times as much only threefold that sum. What is of no less moment in a national

point of view is, that while we are able to use such a greatly increased amount of steel, the saving in coals as against the old Sheffield process was equal to 3,500,000 tons, or coals for the household consumption of as many people.

Abroad, the use of Bessemer steel has become proportionally great. In the United States it is 525,000 tons, in Belgium 70,000 tons, in Germany 260,000 tons, in France 260,000 tons, in Sweden 20,000 tons, being in all a total make of nearly 2,000,000 tons of Bessemer metal. The price of steel rails is below 6*l.* per ton, and many an iron rail was laid at 10*l.*, 11*l.*, and 12*l.* Mr. Bessemer may feel proud that he has founded a manufacture that is now worth 20,000,000*l.* sterling yearly, and which before the end of his life may well reach 100,000,000*l.* It is not, however, by the money value that this great addition to the resources of the world by one man is to be estimated. The advantages are felt in many ways. Even in the steel rails the labour of one man on every two miles that was required for iron rails can be dispensed with. On the existing rails in England it is estimated there is a saving of a capital sum of 170,000,000*l.* There is also a saving on hundreds of thousands of steel tyres for engines and carriages, besides less danger.

In 1862 they began shipbuilding with Bessemer steel. Few will be surprised to learn that this made no impression whatever on the Lords of the Admiralty, that many years were lost. Bessemer's steel anchors, invented in 1858, nearly a quarter of a century ago, are just coming into use.

At length honours began to come to Bessemer. In 1859 the Institution of Civil Engineers

awarded him the Gold Telford Medal. Besides admitting him to the Council, and showing their appreciation of him in many ways, in this year they publicly presented to him a splendid piece of gold plate, made by Hunt & Roskell. Ten years ago the Iron and Steel Institute elected him to be their President. About the same time the Society of Arts awarded him the Gold Albert Medal, though they yearned to give the medal to a foreigner. The President, H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, to show more honour to the recipient, made the presentation at Marlborough House in the presence of the Council.

Mr. Bessemer makes the free avowal that, gratifying as these tributes were, he was no less delighted with those friends who have paid him 1,057,748*l.* golden sovereigns, not an unhandsome fortune apart from other earnings.

Abroad many honours were tendered to him, and some of them singular and such as Englishmen do not attain. He was elected an Honorary Member of the Iron Board of Sweden. The city of Hamburg bestowed on him its freedom in due form. The presentation of a gold medal from the King of Wurtemberg followed, together with a complimentary letter. The King of the Belgians is well known for the attentions he pays to men of learning, and on two occasions he drove over to Denmark Hill to have half an hour's conversation on the various important inventions. Mr. Bessemer's house at Denmark Hill is as remarkable for its associations as for its fine works of art. In the grounds he made at his own expense experiments on the plan for preventing seasickness on the Channel passage. Commercial difficulties, as is well known, in-

terfered with the realisation of this project.

H.M. Government was not able altogether to stop out Mr. Bessemer from receiving the rewards of his labour. The Emperor of Austria, having seen the process at work, felt it his duty to confer on him the title of Knight Commander of the Order of Francis Joseph. The Emperor did not trouble H.M. Government on this matter, but desired his own Ambassador to convey to Mr. Bessemer the collar and gold enamelled cross. This order confers the title of a gentleman, or what is called nobility, and we believe its holder, being otherwise qualified, can be created a Baron of the Empire. The Emperor of the French personally presented a massive gold medal bearing the great inventor's name. The Society of Arts of Berlin elected him an Honorary Member, and forwarded to him an address enclosed in an ebony and bronze casket.

Our brethren in the United States have no crosses and orders to bestow; but they found a better way of showing their gratitude. These decorations will lose their significance, and honorary membership be forgotten; but the Americans determined to perpetuate the name of their benefactor, not by planting a tree, but by planting a city. In Indiana a spot was chosen, fertile in resources, where a great centre of industry can be constituted, and to this they gave the name of Bessemer. It is a growing place, with a fine railway station, and its name already figures on all the maps of the State. Arctic navigators are sometimes envied for their prerogative of attaching names to ice-bound capes. Cook was more fortunate, for the names he gave are now of familiar note

in Australia and New Zealand ; but the city of Bessemer will, it is hoped, for ages commemorate him from whom it received its name.

Thus, endowed with fame, favoured by Fortune, covered with honours, and conscious of his deserving from the benefits he has conferred on the world, it will be well understood that he cannot still without repining look on the conduct of the Government of his native country, for which he has done so much. Even beyond the grave there will be tributes of gratitude to him : statues and monuments will be erected and medals struck. A man so generous is greedy of nothing ; but he cannot remember without pain how he has been treated by the Stamp Office, the War Department, the Foreign Office, and the Admiralty.

Undoubtedly there must be something wrong when no Premier or other Minister feels called upon to designate for testimonies of the national gratitude those who are national benefactors. No doubt some day an ironclad will receive the name of Bessemer, though perhaps first abroad, and posthumous honours will not be wanting. Posthumous honours avail but little in comparison with that recognition which the living man receives. As it is, in most cases that small guerdon, the Companionship of the Bath,

rightly awarded to a brave young captain, falls to a great man of science when he is threescore and ten, and when neither he nor his wife can venture out to the few evenings of celebration where fashion or fancy will allow him to wear it.

In the existing state of affairs men of science give their time, their abilities, and their money for the public good, rarely having the opportunity of obtaining a return, much less of making a fortune, as Mr. Bessemer has done. It is not they who are under obligations to the commonwealth, but the commonwealth to them ; and it is a very small thing that suitable honours, which do not even entail a charge on the purse of the Exchequer, should be tendered. Twenty years ago, at all events, Mr. Bessemer had earned them ; for twenty years he might have worn them ; and it is by no means creditable to us as a community that towards the national creditor we are thus far insolvent, bankrupt even of thanks.

An end will be put to the doubt in our readers' minds ; for, after all, the knightly title is borne by Sir Henry Bessemer. H.M. Government, ashamed of the exposure which has taken place, but too ungracious to make full reparation, have in these last days recommended the Queen thus to designate Henry Bessemer.

DAY-DREAMS.

DREAM that the golden summer
In winter hath no part ;
Dream that the skies are cloudless,
And light is every heart ;
Dream that the laugh of pleasure
Has never sigh of pain,
But endless is in measure,
As joys that come again.

Dream that the happy laughter
Of short and happy days
Has nothing to come after—
It lives, and living stays.
Dream that the sweet entrancing
Of words that now are bliss
Lives with each love-look glancing,
Thrills on with every kiss.

Dream on that love is deathless,
Dream on that hearts are true ;
For lips with sighing breathless
Still whisper it to you.
And sweet as Nature's summer
Is youth when youth is love,
Its summers are for ever,
Its emblem is the dove.

Alas, to ripened summer
Comes chill of autumn day !
And even sweet 'for ever'
May vow yet pass away.
The ripened grain has reapers,
The wine-vat mars the vine,
And half the world are weepers
For those same dreams of thine.

Across the golden meadows,
Beyond the ripened wheat,
Where half in happy shadows
The swaying branches meet,
You know he waits—your lover ;
And all the world around
Has nothing to recover,
For all you've lost is found.

O happy dreams and dreamer !
O happy days of youth !
Sweet seeming to the seemer
As only blissful truth !
No cloud upon the sunshine,
No shadow on the brow,
Life only sweet as love-time,
The time you dream of—now !

RITA.

THE BELLE OF SANTA CRUZ.

A 'Scrimmage' at Teneriffe.

How came it to pass that Teddy O'Grady and I, subalterns both in her Majesty's Dashers, stationed at Cape Town, found ourselves one November morning, in the year 184—, walking across the grand square of the city of Santa Cruz, Teneriffe, instead of being on the high seas, crowding all sail southward ho for Table Bay?

It occurred in this wise.

About three weeks before, we, with other passengers, had embarked at Gravesend on board the good ship Lady Floriline, John Forteith commander. A succession of heavy autumnal gales, during which her ladyship had behaved very badly, pitching and tossing, kicking and plunging, reeling and staggering, had driven us so much out of our course as to place us on a dark, dirty, and worse than ever stormy night, about one hundred miles to the northward of the Canary Islands.

Non sine lacrymis—not without tears, as O'Grady worded it—had we got even so far; for yards had been carried away, sails split and blown from bolt-ropes, cordage snapped, bulwarks stove in, the cutter lost, and dear old Forteith had been awfully riled, and had angrily desired Howard and Adams of the Rifles 'to stow all that chaff' when asked 'how many chips' of his Lady Floriline he expected to be left standing when he sighted the Cape lighthouse.

Indeed, matters did look as if little or nothing of the vessel was destined to enter Table Bay; for, on the night I have mentioned, and while a regular hurricane was

blowing, something or other aloft gave way, her ladyship 'broached to,' took a header down to the very bottom of Davy Jones's locker, remained for a moment or two buried in that maritime locality, then rose up with her bowsprit broken and dangling about her stern, and the *décollé* female figure, glass and tooth-brush in hand, which represented the damsel after whom she had been named, swept from her bows and gone to grace the statue gallery of some sea-god.

A little while, thus tattered and torn, she hesitates what next acrobatic feat to perform. Then—w-h-i-s-h! s-p-l-a-s-h!—she makes another plunge fathoms below the waves; crack! over topples the foremast; snap! away goes the maintopmast, and presently every yard, sail, and rope stretched on these spars is either thrashing and lashing alongside, or madly swinging and swaying overhead. Well, we had to work with a will all that livelong night to cut the wreck adrift; and when the last strand was severed, and the carpenter reported that hull and rudder were 'as sound as a bell,' we set about rigging jurmasts, and shaped a course for Teneriffe. After some days of watchful 'conning,' of gingerly 'pulling and hauling,' of careful minding 'of luffs and weather-helms,' and of keeping of ever so many 'bright looks-out'—for we were wonderfully and curiously fashioned, and Lady F.'s impromptu sea toilet would not stand much rough handling—we wriggled, one fore-

noon, into the lovely roadstead of Santa Cruz, and anchored opposite the old historic town. Then, so soon as Don Fernando de Castorilo, the health officer, had given us *pratique*, O'Grady and I were over the ship's side, had landed at the Mole, and, as I began by saying, were walking across the square on our way to Dickson's hotel.

Not many minutes did it take us to find that comfortable caravansera, still less to get established in its *salle-à-manger*, and in a composite language of Latin, French, and Irish—O'Grady's native tongue—to give our orders for ollas, pucheros—all sorts and descriptions of Spanish dishes—to an olive-complexioned buxom *dame-de-comptoir*; but who, alas, even across a pretty wide buffet, was at once accredited with the perfume of garlic and tobacco.

Now, as Captain Forteith had told us that his carpenter and half a dozen lubberly shipwrights he had got would take fully three weeks to make the Lady Floriline shipshape and ready again for sea, there was nothing to be done for that time but to make ourselves at home in Santa Cruz; to lionise the island; to ascend its peak; to see its vine- and olive-yards; to visit its old cities of the Guanches; and to fraternise—as much as they would let us—with the cloaked and sombreroed señors, and with the bewitching mantilla-draped, head-veiled, and fan-armed señoras—the lords and ladies of the land.

And a piquant attractive set were the feminines generally, walking with a springy Oaks-filly kind of step, such as they say no women but Spanish move with, and throwing about their eyes and their fans in a way that no other daughters of Eve can,

or do, rival them—so much the better, perhaps.

They'll tell you, these Castilian dames and damsels, that from earliest days of childhood anxious mamma has taught them to amble thus in their gait; has shown them how to open and shut and whirl and twirl their fans, making these pieces of stick and painted paper organs of speech and organs of sight; and that when they have mastered these accomplishments, and learnt to sing love-songs to the strumming of a ribbon-decked guitar, then the educational course of Dolores, Juanita, or Christobel is completed, and that she may 'go in and win.' Add, however, to the curriculum the smoking of cigarettes, the drinking of over-sweet spice-flavoured chocolate, and the rather too free indulgence in pungent esculents—ugh!—and we found the young lady perfect.

However, spite of non-aromatic herbs and strong nicotine, we managed to hit it off pleasantly enough with the pretty señoras and señoritas, who took kindly to 'los oficiales Ingleses,' possibly as a pleasant change from their every-day stereotyped admirers. But the dons and hidalgos—their male belongings—hated the very sight of us; and although assuring us, after the manner of the country, that their houses and contents were at our disposal, that they kissed our hands and feet, that they hoped we might live a thousand years, and so on, were wishing us all the time at Jericho, in the Red Sea, anywhere rather than parading the streets and strands of Santa Cruz, and lounging in the saloons and gardens of their large moresco-looking, but somewhat dilapidated, houses—Dolores, Christobel, or Juanita aforesaid being then and there our companions.

'Be jabus,' says O'Grady one day, 'a mighty proud set of spalpeens these oisland dons, but as poor as a Dooblin keyarman. Why, look ye, there's that Don Pedro de Povero Diabolo, the man we see wid ight or noine paces of ribbun tacked on his coat, the Intendente Militario they call him, the husband, ye moinde, of that noice leetle señora you've now and agen sain me walking on the Meerena wid. Whoy, the beggar has onuly four or foive doubloons the month, a mather of some twelve or fifteen pounds; and as for the casa [house] which he is always putting a *la disposicion de ustedes*—at our deesposal—bedad! tree auld cheers, a squeer table, a sleep of keyarpet on a polished flure, and hoigh-back rickety sofa of the toime of Coloombus, and on which Inez and he can't seet widout squazing; begorra, that's all, or rarely all, the foorniture oi've sain in the house for use or for show!'

Now this Don Pedro to whom O'Grady alluded was no end of a Teneriffe swell, his impecuniosity notwithstanding. He was a knight of Saint Fernando, of Isabella, of Calatrava, of goodness only knows what besides; he had the blue blood of Castille's best grandees circulating in his veins; and although past the sixties in age, and well into 'the sere and yellow leaf,' was as frisky and peppery as the youngest sub in the King of Spain's army. *Au reste*, he was a wizened, sapless, tobacco-dried-up old soldier, of whom you never saw more than his forage-cap, thin colourless face, and his boots, the rest of his person being always enveloped in his large military regulation cloak. Inez, his wife—the blooming May to this faded December—was about twenty, slight, graceful, fairer than most of her country-

women, with large, black, sparkling eyes, a rosy laughing mouth, pearly teeth (Havannahs notwithstanding), and a glorious profusion of glossy jet hair crowning a head which no other coif than a lace veil, fastened by a high tortoiseshell comb, was ever permitted to cover. Admittedly she was the belle and beauty of Santa Cruz—for even that spiteful old harridan Donna Isabella de Muchos Malos Palabres said so—and the pet name she went by was La Hermosa, Inez the Beautiful. There were eyes and eyes, and there were fans and fans, in the city and suburbs of that island; but Inez distanced all her skilled compeers in the use and abuse of both. When she sent a bright sidelong glance out of those large flashing optics, let a word or two fall from those ruby lips, dimpled that lovely face of hers with an arch smile, and waved and whirled, furled and unfurled, the air-producing little whirligig she held in her jewelled hand—pop! bang!—down dropped the spoil at which this mitrailleuse of artillery had been directed, as if it had been knocked over by a Martini-Henry rifle. Howard, Adams, your humble servant, all of us were more or less hurt by random shots; but dear old Teddy O'Grady, he felt them hottest and hardest; and La Hermosa, knowing this, kept on firing and firing without mercy, and riddled him to pieces. So down he fell; and being a hot and impetuous Galway man, it was as much as I could do to keep him from getting foul of old Pedro, hurling him over the precipices of the 'pake,' pitching him into the 'saw,' 'spificating the villen,' and in point of fact from committing some threatened act of violence that would rid him of the Intendente, and leave his wife a 'widdier.' He was 'clane gone

XUM

t
e
o
l
t
y
l
-
s
n
,
;
,
t
.t
t
o
d
i-
m
e
n
ct
of
fe
ne

XUM



The Don makes a fatal error, exposes his defence ; O'Grady sees it, lunges like lightning, and with terrible force.

See 'The Belle of Santa Cruz.

ament that colleen,' he said. 'The left soide of me body is as wake as wather-ghruel,' he sung; and he vowed 'he'd be the death of the "pra-Adamite" husband—auld Meetoosalah Pedro—he would!'

But notwithstanding these menaces the Don walked in peace, and took matters very quietly. He did not appear to notice O'Grady's predilections, or to dispute his pretty *cara sposa's* right to an open flirtation; 'they all do it,' so why not his better-half? He still puffed away at his principles and regalias, still smothered himself in his roquelaure, still treated my friend with the greatest politeness and courtesy, and was still always placing the 'tree auld cheers' and 'the sleep of key-arpet' at his service.

Well, one night there was a *fête* at the palace of the Governor, El Conde de Pocos Pesos. His excellency gave us lots of good music from the military bands of the garrison; lots of brilliant light from his country-pressed oil; lots of grapes, oranges, dates, and figs from the gardens hard by; lots of sour Canary wine; but little—precious little—in the way of substantial meats and drinks. It could not be called a ruinous entertainment, and probably cost the Count three or four dollars good and lawful coin of Spain. We soon got wearied of the whole affair, O'Grady especially; for although Don Pedro, without the everlasting capote, splendidious in all the bravery of his best uniform and multitudinous stars and crosses, was well to the front, Inez the Beautiful did not show. Fandangos, boleros, cachuchas, waltzes, had no charm for him,—O'Grady of course I mean. He passed by flashing eyes without a glance at their lustre. He disregarded the *buenas noches*, and other polite salutations of

many a fascinating maid. He ruthlessly crushed against dainty natural and artificial feminine configurations without regard to disarrangement or physical suffering. He scratched with the heavy bullion of his epaulettes the nude arms and shoulders of delicately cuticled brunettes without a word of apologetic sorrow; and he dug his spurred heels—he was our adjutant—into the skirts and shapely ankles of matrons and maids, and tore flounces and flesh without so much as asking pardon for the injuries. More than all, he aroused the indignation of Madam the Countess of Pocos Pesos—the great captain's captain—by leaving untasted the fruit and acid vintage of her banquet, anathematising the whole turnout as 'a deuced rotten Barma-coide faste.' He was 'out of soorts,' he said; 'completely down on his luck;' and he'd 'be off and take a moonlight stroll on the *bache*.' But instead of walking towards the *bache*, I see him follow the road to the Calle de la Reyna—Queen-street—in which my lady Inez lives.

'That's not the way to the Atlantic, old man!' I shout after him.

'You be smothered!' he replies, goes on, and I turn towards mine inn.

But scarcely am I settled to my whisky and cigar, when in rushes O'Grady, pale and agitated. He seizes my tumbler, and drains it at a draught.

'In the name of goodness,' I say, 'what's up? Where have you been? what on earth have you been doing?'

'Doing! look here!' and stripping off his coat he shows me a wound through the fleshy part of his left arm, which had saturated his sleeve with blood, and from which the gore was still oozing.

'Great Heavens!' I exclaim, 'how's this? What row have you been in? Who has wounded you after this fashion?'

'Don't be after making a fuss, Tim,' he says, 'it's nothing—nothing to what oi gave Carlos de Garrido, leutenant of artillery stationed here,—ye know the baste,—and who, belave me, won't be able to show on parade wid his guns for a month to come. Oi didn't go to the say, as ye know. Oi went to have a quiet chat and a dish of tay wid Inez, wid the Señora Povero Diabolo. Oi mane oi'd fraquently been before, and oi fancy me prisence was welcome. Well, the tay, or rather some voile chocolate, had been sarved, and oi was telling me lady in me best Spanish of Pocos Pesos' fate,—whew!—from the Powers ounly knows where, Carlos de Garrido tares into the room, blurts out a word or two oi don't understand, then draws a stiletto, and widout By your lief, or Wid your lief, dales me a prod, the coward! Faith, he staggered me a bit; but oi was on me pins in a jiffey. Oi wrenched the wapon from his hand, and letting drive—one, two—right from the shoulder, hit full into his face, reeled him over, and oi think that oi have irremadially damaged his big Rooman nose, and deesposed of two or tree of those tobacco-doyed teet of his down his ugly throat. Inez scrambled, clung to me arum, intrated me to spare her coozen—maybe he was her coozen, though the family loikeyness isn't strong—and then fainted away. Oi left her loying sinseless in one corner of the flure, Garrido blading in another, and here oi am. Sind for some more dhrink, Tim; for oi'm hated and favered, and thin we'll be talking the mather over in pace.'

Betimes next day in walks

Don Pedro to Dickson's, and seeks an interview with O'Grady. The old caballero is more polite than ever; he bows and scrapes; figuratively he kisses Teddy's hands and feet; assures him of his exalted estimation; and ends by requesting the honour of crossing swords with him that evening in the gardens at the end of the town. He adds that he must vindicate the honour of his house, and keep from scandal his young wife's reputation. He has evidently got hold of the wrong end of the story, for he makes no allusion to the artillery cousin, nor to the dagger-stab still smarting and paining the man he is addressing; he merely, over and over again, insists on fighting. O'Grady tells him that he has not the least objection to fight; indeed, as an Irishman, he is rather given that way; but that upon much the same principle that he would not marry a woman old enough to be his grandmother, he'd as lief not fight a gentleman of sufficient years to be his grandfather, and which Don Pedro certainly is. Upon which the Don's blood is more up than ever. He says that he is juvenility itself; that his feelings are young, if, indeed, his age is advancing; that he belongs to the best of nobility; and that no Spaniard, from the Cid down to Epartero, was ever too old for the duello. Fight he must, and fight he will.

'Bay it so,' says O'Grady; 'oi'm your man, and by the poiper that played before Moses, look out for squalls, for oi'll tache you

"what pirls do environ
The man that meeddles wid cauld iron."

Adios, viva usted con Dios, as ye yoursels say in these paarta.'

So the meeting was settled; and at sundown O'Grady and I, with Castoroilo, the doctor, in attendance, sneak into the gardens as

quietly as possible. But imagine our astonishment, when we had been trying to keep the matter dark, to find half of the *élite* of Santa Cruz drawn together to witness the passage of arms between their Intendente and the English officer. Yes; on the walks and plats there were the men smoking and lounging; in the summer-houses and pavilions there were the women prying and peeping, tricked out, all in their best go-round-bull-fights finery, and all 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles.' There they were, giggling and flirting, eating ices, drinking chocolate, and making an outing and a holiday of the whole business. Likely enough they looked upon Pedro and O'Grady as a couple of matadors brought into the ring for an encounter with an Andalusian bull.

Soon the Don comes on the field. He divests himself of his cloak and military tunic, and in his shirt-sleeves and tight pantaloons looks like the driest of dried Guanche mummies in the city of Laguna hard by. He does not seem to have an inch of solid flesh into which O'Grady's small-sword could be driven, nor a single drop of that blue blood he is always boasting about to be set free from his shrivelled veins.

The two men—the one so old and time-worn, the other so young and world-fresh—take post opposite each other, and well-tried Toledo blades are placed in their hands. They salute and put themselves 'on guard.'

At the very first exchange of 'feints' I see that the plucky old Don is an adept swordsman; he handles his weapon with so much grace and delicacy. O'Grady is less polished and attractive with his sword, but I know him to be no mean fencer—that he has a quick eye, an iron wrist, strength

and agility to counterbalance his opponent's superiority. The odds—and I daresay those ladies were making bets in Havana cigars, Paris gloves, and bonbons with their attendant cavaliers—were therefore to my mind in favour of my principal.

The attack begins.

Clink, clink, clink, clink. The swords ring one against the other. Point and parry, parry and point, are rapidly and dexterously exchanged. Clink, clink, clink, clink. The blades are disengaged while each man pauses for an instant to take breath.

Presently the combat is resumed. Clink, clink, clash, clash, clink. A lunge might and main from the Don, an incomplete faulty guard by O'Grady, and he gets pricked, hardly more, in the forearm.

'Bueno, bueno!' the lookers-on shout, and clap their hands, just as if they were applauding a neat hit or catch at a cricket-match.

Again the swords are crossed.

Clink, clink, clash, clash, clink, clash, g-u-r-r-h, as one iron scrapes against the other. Ah, O'Grady's point has made a very decided, but not deep, puncture in what little there is of the Intendente's deltoid.

'Basta, basta, basta! It is enough,' we all exclaim; 'it is enough! Blood has been spilt on both sides. It is enough, Don Pedro; enough, O'Grady!'

'O'im quite content,' calls out Teddy, dropping his rapier.

'Para mí! non soy!—I'm not satisfied!' spits out his antagonist. He is livid with rage, smarting with pain, and wants *mucho mas sangre*—much more blood.

So, spite of our endeavours and protestations, at it they go again; but not for long; for, whether from fatigue or mischance we know not, the Don makes a fatal error—exposes his defence; O'Grady

sees it, lunges like lightning and with terrible force. Ah, *mal-dita, carramba!* His blade transfixes his enemy somewhere about the seventh rib.

He staggers, and falls back on the turf; the men crowd up; the women scream; Fernando de Castoroillo examines the wound, shakes his head, and sends off to apprise Inez of her chance of widowhood, who, we hear subsequently, receives the news with a pleasant hopeful smile.

Then the aguazils—the Santa Cruz ‘bobbies’—who had been dodging behind the orange- and olive-trees, and had not attempted to interfere before, move up, and ‘run us both in.’

Next morning we are taken before the Alcade—the beak—and examined; but as the fight is declared on all sides to have been strictly on the square, entirely in accordance with the laws of Spanish honour, and moreover as very many of the worthy Santacruzians are waiting impatiently for old Pedro's official and marital dead man's shoes, why the worshipful magistrate lets us off with a fine, and an injunction to clear out of the city *ventre à terre*. So for a few days we rusticate in the grass-grown streets of Laguna; then once more embark on board the Floriline, set sail alow and aloft, and turn our backs on Inez, Pedro,

Pocos Pesos, Garrido, and the whole ‘biling.’

Years passed away. O'Grady, poor fellow, had been killed in the Caffre wars, and I had returned to England.

Shopping one day in Regent-street, my attention was attracted by a lady's voice asking, in a foreign accent, for some ‘silk of Lyons’ and some ‘gloves of Paris.’ Turning round, and glancing under a fashionable bonnet, who should I see but our old friend Inez of Teneriffe, looking more matronly, but as fascinating and pretty as ever? We entered at once into conversation. She told me that Don Pedro recovered from his wound, and after plaguing her for ‘two, tree years’ with a churchyard cough, which the doctors were not obliging and gallant enough to permit to run its own rapid course, but were always patching up with ‘oil of codfeeshe,’ had at last ‘gone out,’ the saints be praised! That—*si, certamente!*—she was married again, was now the wife of El Colonel Carlos de Garrido, with a lapful of children, and—with the same flash of the sparkling eyes that had bowled over Teddy on the Marina of Santa Cruz—‘*todavía a la disposición de usted, señor*—entirely at your service, sir.’

MRS. LANCASTER'S RIVAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'A FRENCH HEIRESS IN HER OWN CHATEAU.'

CHAPTER XXV.

PERSECUTION.

GENERAL HAWKE was very ill for some days after this. He had had a slight stroke, and the doctor told Randal that though he might recover to a great extent, it was likely that his mind would never be quite the same again. During those days he often asked for Mabel, and she was glad to go and sit by him; for though she did not feel herself of any use there, his room was a refuge from Randal. He was constantly there, for he nursed his father and watched over him with the attention of a much more unselfish character; but he seemed to feel that love-making was out of place in a sick-room, and Mabel was at peace as she sat there quietly working near the old man's pillow.

Still there were meals, and there were hours in the drawing-room and garden when, if Randal did not persecute her with words, he made her feel what was in his mind all the time. She wished she could make him understand how extraordinary she thought this behaviour of his; did not he know what she must think of him, since she heard the truth about Mrs. Lancaster? but he seemed quite easy on that score. Apparently he did not understand how entirely that history had altered and decided Mabel's feelings towards him. He was just the same as before, only more attentive, more affectionate, more happily confident in his manner, and he

would not see the stiffness that she tried to put into hers. He did not allude to his former engagement till one evening, when he came to her in the drawing-room, and told her that he was obliged to go away the next morning, to stay one night. Mabel felt very glad, but she did not say so.

'My father is really better,' said Randal, 'and his mind will soon be quite clear again, whatever Dr. King may say. What do you think he said to me just now, Mabel?'

'I don't know. What?'

'He asked me when we were going to be married—you and I.'

'I hope you told him—never,' said Mabel, with crimson cheeks.

'No, I did not,' said Randal. 'I told him that I thought we must wait till he was well enough to go to the wedding. He said: "No, that won't do. You might wait for ever." I believe it would be a wonderful thing for him, if that wish of his was carried out.'

Mabel sat quite silent, looking on the ground.

'Have not you had time enough to forgive me, Mabel?' he said. 'The best excuse for that most unfortunate affair is that it happened before I knew you. Every one has something to repent of and be forgotten. A good girl like you ought to think it her duty to forgive.'

'I have nothing to forgive,' said Mabel, 'except the way in which you tried to deceive me about that—saying things about Mr. North-

cote, as if it was he, and almost pretending that Mrs. Lancaster was out of her mind, poor thing, when all the time—I can't think how you *could*!

'All very wrong, no doubt,' said Randal; 'but can't you excuse what was done for love of you?'

'I don't like such love as that. I don't want it,' said Mabel.

'You hate me, then?' said Randal.

He had walked across to the window, and stood there looking at her as she sat in the corner of the sofa. Her hands were clasped together, the small fingers squeezing each other tightly; the bright flush had faded and left her very pale.

'No, no,' she said, shaking her head. 'I don't exactly hate you, but I am astonished at you—how you can say these things to me, when you know how wretched you have made poor Mrs. Lancaster.'

'I assure you, Mabel, you are quite mistaken,' said Randal solemnly. 'She is not wretched at all. She has made up her mind; she has had her revenge, by doing her best to blacken me in your eyes. My dear girl, you don't understand that kind of woman. She is a thorough flirt, and flirts don't break their hearts. Trust me, I know all about it.'

Mabel did not believe him; but there was something in Randal—he ought to have succeeded better in life, with that to help him—which generally prevented people from setting themselves violently in opposition to him. Those words against Mrs. Lancaster made her shrink from him all the more, but she said nothing. After a pause she got up and walked towards the door. Randal came hastily after her.

'I may not see you again to-

night,' he said. 'Won't you say good-bye? I must be off early to-morrow.'

Mabel gave him her hand: he held it, and looked earnestly into her face.

'Sleep well,' he said; 'and if you think of me at all, try to forgive me. It was all very wrong, but it was for your sake. If you had never come here, you little witch, with those wonderful eyes of yours that read a man's thoughts, nothing of all this would have happened.'

'O, don't say that! Let me go!' exclaimed Mabel.

He stood a moment longer, holding her hand, and then suddenly kissed it and let it go.

'You will have to belong to me one of these days, *ma belle*!' he said.

In spite of her lover's injunction, Mabel did not sleep at all well that night. She was very much troubled in mind, and lay awake thinking of him and his obstinacy, wondering what was to be the end of this state of things, and wondering, too, whether Mrs. Lancaster was really miserable. She was learning by experience to take Randal's assurances with a great deal of doubt. But the difficulty was, how was she to get out of it all, to free herself completely from him and his influence? It was all very well to make resolutions, but not so easy to keep them, with Randal in the house. She might shrink from him, and try to avoid him, but he was irrepressible.

Presently she fell asleep, and dreamed that Mrs. Lancaster, prettier than she ever was by daylight, was reproaching her bitterly for taking Randal away. Mabel tried to defend herself, and woke with tears on her face. But in consequence of this dream she made a resolution. Randal was

gone, and for once she would act like an independent woman.

After breakfast, and after visiting the General, who was sleepy, and did not seem to want her, Mabel put her hat on and went out to the stable-yard. She had often been there with Randal to take sugar and apples to the horses, but to-day she went with a different purpose. Randal's horse, Turk, was outside the stable-door, having his legs washed. Jenkins, the groom, looked up from his splashing to touch his cap to Miss Ashley.

'Is the Turk tired, Jenkins?' said Mabel.

'O, dear, no, miss! He's only been as far as the station.'

'I want very much to go to St. Denys this morning. Do you think you could take me?'

Mabel was alarmed at her own boldness, and spoke very doubtfully.

'Yes, miss, I could take you,' said Jenkins, rather surprised. 'In the dog-cart, did you mean?'

'Yes. How soon can you be ready?'

'In twenty minutes, miss.'

'Thank you,' said Mabel.

She did not go back into the house, but wandered about till Jenkins brought the carriage round. He was sure that his master would wish him to attend to Miss Ashley's orders; all the servants saw very well what was to be.

'I want to go to Captain Cardew's house,' Mabel said, as they drove down the hill. 'Do you know which it is?'

'Yes, miss.'

Mabel felt none of the misgivings that poor Flora Lancaster had felt when she came to visit her. She was only eager to be there, and wished unreasonably that the Turk would trot faster. She was delighted to find herself

at last at the garden-gate, at the house-door, actually ringing the bell. It was only when the little maid had opened the door and was staring at her that she was suddenly seized with a nervous fear: perhaps Mrs. Lancaster would not see her; perhaps she would be angry and reproachful, as she was in the dream.

Mabel provided against the first danger by following the maid straight into the drawing-room, where Flora, pale, hollow-eyed, and wrapped in a large shawl, was sitting in an armchair. Mrs. Cardew, in a very old gown and cap, with a duster in her hand, was settling the ornaments on the chimneypiece. Neither of them dreamed of a visitor so early in the day. Mrs. Cardew, turning round in consternation, and having only had distant glimpses of Mabel driving by, did not at first know who this dark slight girl could be, who came forward to Flora with such a sad face, and such a shy yet eager manner.

Flora's pale face became rosy all of a sudden; she got up, holding her visitor's hand, and looking at her wonderingly.

Mabel broke the very awkward silence, looking at Mrs. Cardew.

'Is it—your mamma?' she said softly to Flora.

'Yes,' said Mrs. Cardew, smiling and nodding. She had just had presence of mind to drop her duster into a corner behind the coal-scuttle.

'O, this is Miss Ashley, mother,' said Flora, speaking with an effort.

Mrs. Cardew's face became grave immediately. Mabel guessed that she wondered what business Miss Ashley could have with her daughter.

'I have only a few minutes,' said Mabel, who had a loyal fear of the Turk's catching cold, 'but

I wanted most particularly to speak to you.'

Flora looked at her mother, and Mrs. Cardew, the most dutiful of women, went quietly out of the room.

'Sit down,' said Flora. 'There is a nice little chair. This is not quite such a breezy meeting as our last one on the beach, Miss Ashley.'

She sank back into her own chair, smiling at Mabel, who felt now as if she could not speak. The wreck of Flora's beauty struck her as too terrible. And was this all her fault?

She could not sit still in her chair, like a grown-up civilised woman. She came and knelt down by Flora, looking up into her face with wet imploring eyes.

'O, do forgive me!' she said. 'I did not know, and yet it is all my fault. But I hate him!'

She had taken off her hat as she left her chair, and now she stooped her head down and laid her cheek against Flora's hand, as it rested on the arm of the chair. Flora's outward calmness deserted her for a moment then. She looked at the small head with its soft dark waves of hair, at the slight little figure crouching there beside her, and shivered suddenly all over.

'O child, don't!' she cried, with a sharp pain in her voice. Then, yielding to a strong attraction that she could not herself understand, she bent down over Mabel, drew her gently into her arms, and kissed her many times.

'Did you come to comfort me, you dear child?' she said presently.

'I don't know,' said Mabel. 'I came to see you, and to tell you that I never would—and to ask you something too.'

'What is it?' said Flora.

'What I am to do. He is so dreadfully determined. He does

not mind what I say, and it is more horrid than I can tell you, now that the General is ill. Last night I could not sleep for thinking of it. It is so trying for a girl like me.'

'You don't care for him at all?' said Flora, in a low voice. Her arm was still round Mabel, and the girl was leaning against her. It was too strange and sweet, this sympathy, to be given up quickly, and Mabel felt that she must be doubly safe from Randal, guarded thus by his old love.

'No; I did like him rather, but never so much as that. And now I can't bear to see him or think of him,' said Mabel gravely. 'And I can't possibly understand why he cares for me.'

'Does he care for you?' said Flora.

'He says so,' answered Mabel, with startled eyes.

'I should like you to think a little,' said Flora, after a pause, 'and try to find out why he professes to care so much for you. Think of the differences between you and me—your superiority to me.'

Mabel blushed and almost laughed as she looked up at her friend.

'I can't think of *that*, because it does not exist,' she said. 'You are entirely superior to me. That is part of the mystery of it.'

'No; I am your inferior,' said Flora, 'in birth, but that does not matter so much. And in something else, which is everything.'

'You don't mean money?'

'Yes; I do. Listen,' said Flora. 'If you had cared for him at all, I should never have told you this. But as you don't, and as you want to know what it is that interests him so much in you, and as you are too innocent and noble-minded to have guessed the truth for yourself, I think you had

better be made to understand it. When he broke off his engagement with me that day on the beach, he told me that it was necessary for him to marry some one with a fortune. It is a bad world, and one had better not set one's heart on it,' said Flora, ending with a sigh.

'I was most wonderfully stupid not to think of it before,' said Mabel. 'O, horrid wretch, how could he!'

'On the whole,' said Flora, 'I don't suppose he is more horrid than half the young men in England. But don't let us talk about him any more. I hope you will soon meet somebody who cares for you for yourself, dear.'

She sat dreamily gazing at Mabel, and stroking the hair back from her forehead with slow unconscious fingers.

'But what am I to do?' said Mabel.

'Be resolute, and try and leave Pensand as soon as you can. Have you no excuse for going away?'

'No, I have no friends to ask me.'

'Mrs. Strange?'

'I just know her, but I can't ask to go there,' said Mabel, shaking her head.

On that subject it seemed impossible to come to any conclusion. Flora could not help Mabel herself, and was not in a position to ask any one else to help her; it seemed as if the poor little heiress must fight her own battle as best she could. But in spite of that she felt stronger and happier, now that she and Mrs. Lancaster really understood each other. They were friends, and that was something, though it was not a friendship that could be of any use.

Mabel's first visit to St. Denys was a long one. Jenkins was tired of driving up and down the hill before she appeared; the Turk

was impatient too, and flew home as if his master was behind him.

Mabel was not Flora's only visitor that day. Dick Northcote came in towards evening, and told her that his aunt was at Carweston, and he was very dull at home.

'You people in this neighbourhood are very selfish, I think,' said Flora. 'You enjoy yourselves, going to each other's houses, and never think of that poor girl at Pensand, who is quite miserable all this time.'

'Because General Hawke is ill?' said Dick.

'That certainly does not make her any happier, because it throws her entirely with the man who wishes to marry her, and whom she dislikes with all her heart.'

'How do you know that?' said Dick. 'On the contrary, I believe she likes him very much.'

'She came to see me this morning, in a state of despair, poor child. It is true, Dick; I am not exaggerating. She does not know what to do to free herself from him, and indeed I did not know what to suggest.'

'But what does the fellow mean by it?' cried Dick, in great indignation.

'He wants her fortune, and he means to marry her,' said Flora. 'He intends to bring her round to it in time. And certainly, keeping her shut up there at Pensand, without a creature to speak to, he has a very good chance of tiring out her patience. She is very unhappy, but what can she do? Imagine her coming to me of all people, and confiding in me, poor little thing! I could do nothing to help her. I have no money, no influence, no establishment. If I had anything, I would fetch her away from Pensand in spite of ten guardians. Mrs. Strange might do it. Your aunt might do it. Why don't they?'

'Her being miserable, and disliking Randal, is a new light, you see,' said Dick. 'I'll bring it to bear on them this evening. I'm going to dine at Carweston.' He gazed out of the window, gave a long low whistle, and muttered, 'Poor little thing! Do you think her pretty?' he said to Mrs. Lancaster.

'Very pretty, in a peculiar interesting way. If I was Mr. Dick Northcote, I should think it only civil to go to the Castle and inquire for General Hawke.'

'Well, I suppose it would be the right thing,' said Dick, smiling slightly.

He got up to go, and then suddenly remembered his manners. 'I came to see how you were, by the bye. Do you feel any stronger?'

'Yes, I am better, thank you,' said Flora.

Dear old Dick! she thought, when she was left alone. She had plenty of things to repent of in her life—flirtations, mistakes, selfishnesses—but perhaps nothing with regard to him. One could not be double or heartless with him, good honest fellow.

'Yes,' Flora thought, 'I may be sorry for many things, but I don't think I shall be sorry for advising him to go to the Castle. Little Mabel may be happy if she finds such a refuge as that. So true and frank and kind! Ah, why are there not more men like you, Dick?'

CHAPTER XXVI.

DESPAIR.

IF Mabel had thought that her persecution could not go much farther, she found herself sorely mistaken. Randal came back early in the following day, and

was more affectionate than ever. It was no use for Mabel to put on a cold manner, to give him short answers, to keep out of his way. He seemed not to see all this, but to be perfectly happy and confident, talking of plans for the future, as if it was a certain thing, and taking for granted that Mabel, little as she said, enjoyed this talk and entered into it.

That afternoon he followed her into the garden, and found her low down in a glade of rose-trees. She tried to hurry away by another path, but he overtook her at once, and she was obliged to stop, though she looked sulkily on the ground, and almost stamped her foot in her impatience of him.

'I want to tell you something about my father, Mabel,' he said. 'I saw a doctor yesterday, who told me that he would not get better as long as he had anything on his mind. You remember when he was first taken ill, dear, don't you?'

'Yes,' said Mabel.

'Well, just at that moment, if you remember, he had heard something which seemed to upset the plan he cared for most. I need not tell you what *that* is. His wishes and mine are the same, you know, Mabel. When I can tell my father that you have said "Yes" to me, he will soon be all right again. An easy mind is the great thing in an illness like this.'

Mabel was silent.

'I don't quite know what makes you hesitate so long, Mabel darling. You can't have any doubt of my feelings towards you; do bring this long torment to an end. You don't seem to understand or believe in my love for you.'

'I don't understand it, and I don't believe in it,' said Mabel, raising her eyes for one instant to his. 'It is not *me* you care for at all.'

Randal looked at her with a curious expression. After a moment he said very quietly,

'What in the world can have put that nonsense into your head, Mabel? You would know how wrong you are if you let yourself think. If I did not love you very truly, I should be angry at such an idea.'

'I wish you would be angry,' said poor Mabel.

'No; you may make me unhappy, but not angry, whatever you choose to say or do. But now let us be serious. Are you going to save my father's life?'

'I don't believe it depends on me,' said Mabel, still looking down, and wishing, O, with such earnestness! that she was as active as other girls. Then she thought she would set off and run away, anywhere, to be away from him, and he would hardly dare to run after her. But Mabel could not run; she must stay there among the rose-bushes, and listen to whatever Randal chose to say to her.

'I assure you it does,' he said. 'Why can't you make up your mind? Don't you see how much better it would be for both of us to have something settled? You must dislike this uncertainty as much as I do; you can't be happy in your position here. It is altogether absurd. But as my wife, don't you see, dear Mabel, you would at once be in your right place, and the dearest comfort to us all. Listen; will you let it be next week? I could easily make arrangements.'

Mabel could have cried, she felt so helpless, so miserable. Randal thought his perseverance was going to be rewarded, when she looked up with wet eyes and trembling lips, clasping and unclasping her hands mechanically, and trying to speak, as it seemed,

without being able to find any words.

'My darling,' he said, 'don't look so unhappy. Only trust yourself to me.'

He came a little nearer, but Mabel moved quickly away from him.

'No,' she said. 'How am I to make you understand, if you will not? I don't like you; I won't marry you, either next week or any time. No, indeed, I am not happy here. I must go away. Somebody will take me in.'

'My dear girl, you take things up so violently,' said Randal. 'I can't let you go away, and you could not do it, you know. You are bound to stay in my father's house, if he chooses to have you there, till you come of age or marry. As to the other affair—you are so agitated that I will say no more to-day. But I am sure you will soon be more reasonable.'

Mabel turned away from him and did not answer. He lingered a moment, and then walked slowly away towards the house. When he was out of sight she hurried to the house too, by another path, and up to her own room, where she spent the rest of the afternoon. This seemed indeed to be despair. There was to be no escape from this prison of Pensand; nobody could take her away from it; and day by day she was to be tormented by this love-making of Randal, which she now hated more than words could say. And she was in this bondage for two whole years,—bound to stay here till she came of age or married,—and of course she would be allowed to marry no one but Randal himself. Very fervently did poor Mabel wish herself back at school, with Miss Wrench and the most unpleasant set of girls. She could not even appeal to the General against his son's unmanly

ungenerous behaviour; he would hardly understand what she was talking about.

She looked out of the window, with wild thoughts of running away, of escaping to some one—if there was any one in the world—who would be strong enough to protect her from Randal. Come of age or marry! the words went on ringing in her ears. And then suddenly, she did not know why or how, there came into her mind the remembrance of that other man who had asked her to marry him—his tall, lanky, bending figure, his kind odd face, the deep tenderness in his voice as he said,

‘Will you let me put an end to all this trouble—to your loneliness, my child! Will you come to my home, and let me take care of you there—always?’

That was at any rate a certain refuge. Mabel sat thinking for a few minutes, with her face buried in her hands, remembering all that strange scene, and how Anthony had said that any change was impossible with him, and that if she ever changed her mind, and would give him the smallest sign of it—Mabel made a sudden dash across the table at her writing-case, and wrote with such a trembling hand that she could hardly read her own words:

‘Dear Mr. Strange,—You said you would never change your mind. I have changed mine, and if you have not forgotten, it shall be as you wished that day. I am too miserable to stay here any longer.—Yours truly,

‘MABEL ASHLEY.’

It did not occur to the poor girl, in her confusion and distress, that an appeal to Anthony’s friendliness would have been speedily answered, without such

a sacrifice as this. She hastily put up her letter and directed it, and spent the rest of the afternoon with her door a little way open, listening for Stevens, who always fetched the letter-bag from the study, and sent it down to meet the postman in the village. Stevens had always looked at her kindly, and she thought that even if the bag was locked, he would see that her letter went safely.

She crept down-stairs when she heard his steady old steps coming down the study passage, and met him in the hall. He stopped, quite startled at the sight of the little lady, anxious-eyed, with crimson cheeks, holding out her letter nervously.

‘Shall I take the bag back, miss, and get it put in?’ he said.

‘No; O no, don’t do that,’ said Mabel. ‘It might be late. Only if you would see that the postman has it, Stevens, please.’

‘He shall have it, miss,’ said the old butler; and he took the letter and went away, rather troubled in his mind.

Mabel went back to her room again, and stayed there till dinner-time. She sat in the window, thinking of Anthony Strange, and trying rather vainly to realise what she had done. She told herself over and over again of Anthony’s goodness, his cleverness, his true affection for herself, the lovely old house that was his home, his mother’s kind bright face. Under their care a desolate girl might surely be happy and at peace; and yet Mabel was conscious of a regret that was almost terror, and a longing wish to have her letter back again. She scolded herself very much for this foolish weakness, and tried to send it away into the background; but it would not be quite driven from its place.

At dinner Randal behaved very well, and said nothing that could trouble her. Afterwards he went away to his father's room, and Mabel was alone in the drawing-room. She could not bear the largeness and stillness of it, with that restless pain at her heart, and after walking up and down two or three times she opened one of the windows, and went out into the starlight. There was a little chill in the air, for September had begun; but it was a very still and beautiful night, and the stars looked so large and glorious that it could not be called dark. Mabel was not the least afraid of being out at night by herself; she knew the garden well, and had wandered about in it at every reasonable hour; still there was a strangeness in those shadowy starlit glades, and, keeping away from them, she wandered a little way along the drive, as far as the great ivy-covered mass of the gate-tower. She was a few yards from it, standing in the fullest light there was, when a quick step startled her, and a man came suddenly out of the deep shadow of the archway, and was passing close to her, when he stopped short with an astonished exclamation. At the first glimpse of the tall figure in that dim light the thought of Anthony had flashed across Mabel's mind. Had he by any wonderful means received her letter already? But the next moment she saw that it was a young man with a beard—Dick Northcote.

'Miss Ashley! what—where are you going?' stammered Dick, in his amazement.

He stood up square and strong before her, and his holding her little cold hand for a moment in his great warm one did not somehow surprise either of them. Mabel was once more insanely

and ridiculously glad to see him, and the remembrance that after all it was not he who was Mrs. Lancaster's lover took away the only drawback to her pleasure.

'I am not going anywhere,' she said, smiling. It was some time since poor Mabel had spoken so cheerfully. 'I am only taking a little walk. It is nice out of doors.'

'Yes, to be sure it is,' said Dick. 'I don't wonder, only—you may be surprised to see me at this time of night, but I was on my way home from Carweston. I've been shooting there to-day, and I thought I would call and inquire for the General. How is he?'

'He is just the same, thank you; he does not alter much,' said Mabel. And this time there were depths of dismality in her voice which filled Dick with pity.

'Perhaps I won't go on to the house as I have met you,' he said. 'We have had a good day's sport. I'm going over there again to-morrow morning. Anthony Strange has capital shooting.'

'Does he shoot?' said Mabel.

'Good Heavens, no! Can you fancy Anthony with a gun? He is far too soft-hearted. He doesn't care even to look at the bag, dear old natural philosopher.'

'Don't you think he is nicer than—any one you ever knew?' said Mabel rather dreamily.

'Much nicer,' answered Dick, with heartiness.

'Yes; so I think.'

'And he seems to have very much the same opinion of you that you have of him,' said Dick; but to this Mabel made no response.

'You must be moped to death up here, and still more now that the General is ill,' said Dick, with colonial frankness.

'Not moped exactly,' said Mabel, with an irrepressible sigh.

'Plagued and tormented, then,' said Dick, in his deep distinct tones.

'O, hush!' she said, putting up her hand. 'They might hear you.'

'Let them hear me. Why don't you go away from this place? What is the use of staying here to be miserable? You had much better leave General Hawke and Randal to take care of themselves.'

'He is my guardian, you know, and I am not nearly of age yet,' said Mabel softly.

'A pretty guardian!' said Dick. 'However, we'll let him rest. Miss Ashley, do you think me a very rough fellow?'

Mabel looked up, and wished it was not quite so dark, that she might see whether Dick was joking. She was in no mood for anything of that kind, so she answered him rather wearily, 'O no; why should I?'

'Most people do, I believe,' said Dick. 'And I suppose you feel that I am a stranger, that you know next to nothing of me?'

'I don't feel that either,' said Mabel. 'I never could, since you were so good to me on the journey.'

'By the bye, do tell me,' said Dick, 'what it was that made you so angry with me that day when I came with my aunt. Had you heard anything against me?'

Mabel was silent for a minute or two. She was trembling a little, and wondering what Dick meant by talking in this way. But she answered him bravely, in a very sweet confident voice,

'Nothing that I believe now.'

Something in the words, or in Mabel's way of saying them, touched Dick strangely. There was another silence between them,

as they stood there under the stars. Poor little Mabel's heart was beginning to beat terribly fast. Here was her friend and champion, who had meant so well all through, and had been so slandered by Randal for his own purposes. O, what did it mean, this mixture of happiness and dread? Perhaps Dick's real story would have shaken Mabel's confidence in him a little; she would not have understood Mrs. Lancaster's part in it, or cared so much for an affection that could be easily transferred. But Mabel was a girl, and Dick was a man, so their views on that subject were not likely to be quite the same. Dick knew that he had been sincere then, and was sure that he felt equally sincere now. He had had a fancy for the little forlorn girl ever since he travelled down with her, only her coldness that day had touched his pride and repelled him. The Flora affair had been a fit of madness, of which Flora herself had cured him very easily. So Dick, knowing all this, was quite free of self-reproach, and there was not a falter or a doubt in his voice as he spoke to his companion in the starlight, and said,

'Look here; do you like me well enough to marry me?'

It was most dreadfully sudden, though Mabel had half known that it was coming. But Dick was not at all prepared for the way in which his offer was received. She started away from him with a low cry of 'O, don't!' and then stopping and covering her face with her hands, began to cry and sob so bitterly that the whole of her little figure was shaken, and Dick, in much consternation, found himself obliged to support her gently with his arm. Perhaps she hardly knew what it was, but the way in

which she leaned against it was some slight satisfaction to him.

'What is it? Have I done very wrong?' inquired Dick, with the greatest tenderness, as soon as the sobs were a little less violent. 'Don't tell me to go away, because I could not leave you here in this state.' There, do you want your handkerchief? here it is. Never mind! I would never have said it if I had thought it would vex you so, indeed. Do forgive me, and stop crying! I shall never forgive myself.'

'O, it's not that,' sighed Mabel, beginning to recover and feel ashamed of herself.

'What is it, then? Tell me all about it,' pleaded Dick. 'Did you really mind my saying that so much? I do love you, and I wish you could love me, though I am a great deal too rough for a little piece of china like you. But anyhow tell me what made you cry.'

This speech nearly upset Mabel again. But she made a great effort to conquer herself, stood very upright, dried her eyes, and began to speak, though every word seemed to go through her own heart with a sharp little pain.

'I'm dreadfully sorry,' she began; 'I ought to have made you understand that you must not say that; it was very wrong of me. I ought not to be unhappy now, for I don't think I shall be here much longer.'

'Good heavens, are you ill?' exclaimed Dick, the extreme mournfulness of these words only bringing one idea to his mind.

Mabel laughed, she could not help it; but she almost cried again.

'O dear, what an ungrateful wretch I am! No, I am not going to die. I believe—I almost think—I am going to be married.'

'To Randal Hawke?' said Dick, with a strange feeling that this was Nemesis—Flora Lancaster over again.

'No, O no! Never, never!'

'That's right, at all events.' Dick stopped short, and meditated. This certainly was the oddest affair altogether. He did not like to ask who it was, and he wondered still more what had made the girl cry. A conviction suddenly took possession of him, and he put it into words at once, bluntly, without much consideration for Mabel.

'Whoever he is, you don't care for him.'

'You have no right to say that,' said Mabel, in a low sad voice, turning her head away.

'I beg your pardon with all my heart.'

Dick was really ashamed of himself, and felt very foolish, but he had his own opinion all the same. Just then he had nothing more to say, for he could not ask Mabel questions, and she naturally was not inclined to tell him anything. On the whole, he thought she was a wise girl when she said to him, in the same sad gentle manner:

'Don't you think you had better go away now?'

'I suppose I had,' said Dick. 'But I am not easy in my mind about you, and I shall not be satisfied till I know all about this. You won't be angry with me for saying so?'

'O no. But don't think about it; it is no use.'

She held out her hand to Dick, but he did not take it at once. He stood silent for a moment, looking at her.

'I must risk making you really angry with me,' he said. 'Would there have been any chance for me, do you think, if this other thing had not existed? Don't

answer in words. If it is "No," take your hand away. If it is "Yes," give it to me. Only to say good-night, you know.'

Mabel only hesitated an instant, and then silently gave him her hand. Dick justified her confidence in him by behaving like a hero. He squeezed it, certainly, but very gently, as if he was afraid of hurting the little fingers. Then he said,

'I can't thank you. But if the gulf between us is not quite impassable, I shall win you yet. Good-night.'

He let her hand go, and walked off at once with long quick steps. Mabel stood as if she was in a dream, and listened till the last sound had died away. Then she drew a long breath, which yet was not quite a sigh, and stole softly back through the shadows to the house.

CHAPTER XXVII.

ANTHONY AND DICK.

MR. STRANGE came down early the next morning, as usual, and found his letters waiting for him. There were long discussions from his antiquarian friends, reports from archaeological societies, anxious for his valuable help; clerical business, magisterial business, advertisements, and begging letters. Anthony was generally ready enough to give his attention to all these things, but on this particular morning there was one letter which eclipsed them all, and that was directed in a trembling girlish hand. The others were pushed into a heap, unopened. Anthony read this letter, threw himself into a chair to think, started up again instantly, and rushed up-stairs three steps at a time to his mother's room. But

when he reached the door he changed his mind; perhaps he remembered that Mrs. Strange was not likely to be up, or ready to listen to him. He ran down-stairs again, and meeting the butler in the hall, told him to ask the ladies not to wait breakfast for him, took his hat, and went out. The butler looked after him with some surprise, as he hurried across the garden, and shut the iron gate behind him with a sharp clang.

'Master looks as happy as if it was his wedding-day,' said the butler to the cook.

'There's never a lady in these parts good enough for him, bless his kind heart,' replied she.

Anthony had his own short cut to Pensand through lanes and fields. No doubt he trespassed continually, but he was so well known and loved that nobody thought of this. Now the way was shorter than ever, for he could strike across stubble-fields, from which the golden corn had been reaped and carried away. So he went straight across country to Pensand as the crow flies; his long legs might truly be said to devour the way, and he carried Mabel's little letter open in his hand.

'Poor dear child!' thought Anthony almost aloud, as he strode through the stubble. 'What it must have cost her to write this! What a blind fool I have been not to see, all this time, that I need only speak again! That wretched Randal must have driven her to this.' Anthony grasped his stick and shook it in the air. 'Thank heaven, she knew there was a refuge open to her, my little Mabel. There is not one girl in a thousand who would have had the noble courage to write this; but she knew who she had to deal with, whose heart was her

own. I shall see her this morning, but we will say nothing to those Hawkes—how well their name suits them! Then I will go back and tell my mother, and we will go together to fetch our darling this afternoon. I defy you to keep her, Randal, now that she has given herself to me.'

Such thoughts as these kept good Anthony Strange company through that morning walk of his, till he came to the end of the fields, where a stile and a rough flight of stone steps led down into the lane. On reaching this more public part of his walk he folded up Mabel's letter and put it away; it was not for ordinary eyes, such as he might meet in the lane. And he had not gone many yards between those two high banks of reddened leaves and curling fern, when he met Dick Northcote, marching along in equal haste with himself.

'I'm glad I met you,' said Dick, shaking hands with great heartiness. 'I was going to Carweston to consult you about something.'

'Then walk on with me. I am going to Pensand,' said Anthony.

Dick wondered what could take this funny old fellow to Pensand at such an hour in the morning. 'Some good reason, probably,' he thought, as he looked at Anthony's beaming face. 'I'll tell him all about it at once, and I'm sure he will help me if he can.'

'I was at Pensand last night,' he said; 'I saw Miss Ashley.'

'Did you?' said Anthony.

'Yes; and she ought not to stay there any longer. It is not a fit place for her, especially now that General Hawke is ill. You know what Randal is, as well as I do. Fortunately she hates him.'

'It won't last much longer,' said Anthony.

'Is the General going to die, or what is going to happen?' asked Dick, in a decided manner. 'Don't be surprised at my taking it up, for I'm tremendously interested.'

'Not more than I am, Dick,' said Mr. Strange.

'Ah! but you don't know what I'm driving at. I must explain—of course in confidence. I should not mention the subject, only I know how friendly you have always been to her—and I don't think she would object to my asking your advice. The plot is thickening, you see. I thought it was only Randal, but there's some one else in the wind now.'

'I don't understand you, my friend,' said Anthony.

He stopped in the middle of the road, folded his arms, and gazed at Dick with a slight puzzled frown.

Dick smiled under his beard, and stared at the opposite hedge.

'Well, you know,' he said, 'you might search all over England without finding a nicer girl than she is. I've come to that conclusion, so now you understand.'

Anthony's face grew graver; a kind sorrowful look came into his eyes.

'Poor old Dick! I'm sorry for you,' he said, in a low voice.

'I shall not begin to be sorry just yet,' said Dick, 'till I am quite sure there's nothing to be done. I may as well tell you all about it. I found her in the garden last night wandering about by herself, her spirits at a very low ebb, and in the course of talking to her I let out what I meant. Poor little thing, she was most awfully cut up, and she told me she was engaged to some one else—not Randal; but it is quite plain to me, whoever he is, she doesn't care for him, and is wretched. So I shall be obliged

to you if you will show me the way out of this labyrinth.'

'Who does she care for?' said Anthony dreamily.

'Me,' said Dick.

He thought Anthony Strange more of a natural curiosity than ever; here he was turning quite pale—from sympathy, Dick supposed.

'Are you sure of that?' said Anthony.

'Positively certain.'

Anthony stared along the lane for a minute or two, then on the ground at his feet. Then he seemed to rouse himself, drew a long breath, and straightened his shoulders.

'This wants thinking about, old fellow,' he said. 'I won't go on to Pensand now. Come back with me to breakfast.'

Dick spent most of that morning talking to his aunt about Mabel, and pouring out his feelings. She could not help smiling a little as she listened, though this pleased her better than the Mrs. Lancaster affair.

Anthony, also, was talking to his mother about Mabel. He was asking her to go to Pensand that very afternoon, and to bring the poor girl away from that 'hawk's nest,' as he called it.

'Insist upon it, mother,' he said. 'You always can do things if you choose. Bring her away; bring the child away, and let us have her here with us for a little while. No matter what may happen afterwards.'

'What is likely to happen afterwards, Anthony?' said Mrs. Strange.

'Who knows? Perhaps Dick,' said Anthony.

'Dick! Does Dick admire her?'

'I have some reason to think so.'

'Well,' said Mrs. Strange thoughtfully, 'Dick has been a

flirt, but I always liked him. He has a good heart underneath the flirting, and in that affair the other day the fault was probably on Mrs. Lancaster's side. Mabel Ashley might do worse than marry my old friend Dick. Better than Randal Hawke, at any rate. Do you know, Anthony, at one time I had an idea that you might yourself—'

She laid her hand on his shoulder as he sat beside her, and looked at him, smiling a little.

'Even you, old Rector,' she said. 'Your heart is young enough still.'

'May it never grow old!' said Anthony.

He made her no other reply, and though he smiled, it was so sadly that she felt something must be wrong with him. This instinct troubled her, but she asked him no more questions; and there was one little explanation that certainly she would never see. Mabel's letter lay on the hearth in Anthony's room, a small heap of flimsy gray ashes.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

FREEDOM.

MRS. STRANGE took Kate Northcote with her, and drove to Pensand Castle that afternoon. On the way, Kate, full of her new interest in Mabel Ashley, could not help confiding it to her old friend.

'Anthony hinted it to me this morning,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I think it might be a good thing for them both; and what an excellent match for Dick, though I daresay that view of it never crossed his mind!'

'He is such a careless creature, that I think you are most likely right,' said Kate, smiling. 'I

only hope he will be steady and constant.'

'O yes. Anthony admires and likes this girl so much, that I feel sure there is something in her, something worth a man's constancy,' said Mrs. Strange. 'Well, if I have her at Carweston, he can come there as much as he pleases. But we must expect plenty of difficulties with these guardians of hers. Randal Hawke won't like the idea of my taking her away, to begin with.'

'Randal is so entirely good for nothing, that it is dreadful to think of her having been under his influence for so long,' said Kate.

When they arrived at the Castle, Mrs. Strange began by inquiring for General Hawke. He was much the same, Stevens said. Miss Ashley was at home. But when they were in the drawing-room, it was Randal, not Mabel, who came almost immediately. He seemed ready to talk about everything, laughed, and was rather noisy; somehow he was altered from the cool elegant Randal they had known before. His face was rather thin, and his eyes were large and bright; he looked altogether ill and restless.

'And how is Miss Ashley?' said Mrs. Strange.

'She is very well, thank you. She is good enough to make herself happy in our dull sad house. But you have no idea of the difference my father's illness makes to us. Mabel is so good and kind, she sits in his room a great deal, and he likes to have her there; but any one else would feel it terribly.'

'Not very good for such a young girl, to be shut up in a sick-room,' said Mrs. Strange.

'She seems to like it.'

'I came to-day,' said Mrs. Strange, 'hoping to take her back

with me for a little visit. Is she in the house, do you know? I should like to ask her what she thinks of it.'

Randal was silent for a moment, looking at Mrs. Strange. She also looked quietly at him, and there was a determination in her face which told her friend Kate that she would have her way in the end. Randal saw it too, perhaps. He smiled faintly, got up, and walked across towards the bell. He did not ring, however, but turned round and stood on the hearth-rug.

'Exceedingly kind of you,' he said. 'Perhaps you understand that it is a great responsibility to have a charge like this, especially when her proper guardian is incapable. I am not sure, do you know, that I shall be justified in sending her away.'

'You have known me so long.'

'O, of course; I only feel very grateful to you. Mabel is a charming girl; but you don't know much of her, I think.'

'Very little,' said Mrs. Strange.

'I should be glad to improve our acquaintance.'

'Mabel is not popular with everybody,' said Randal. 'In fact, in plain English, you might find her more of a charge than you cared for. Those who admire her most—I am one of them—can't deny that she has her peculiarities. Your son may have told you that.'

'My son thinks Miss Ashley a very nice girl,' said Mrs. Strange. 'I am not at all afraid to undertake the charge.'

Kate listened with some amusement to all this. Randal smiled, stroked his moustache, looked out of the window, and then said rather suddenly,

'Well, you are very right; for she would be a treasure to any house. The truth is, Mrs. Strange,

you mean this proposal most kindly; but to me it is a positive cruelty. You don't know what this house will be without her. I should have nobody to speak to. I must stay here while my father is ill; and Mabel and I are the greatest friends.'

If Randal hoped to touch Mrs. Strange's heart, he was disappointed. As for Kate Northcote, she looked at him with scorn and wonder. Mrs. Strange said very dryly,

'Indeed! That is quite a young man's view of the question, when young men are selfish, which happens now and then, I'm afraid. Very nice for you, no doubt, to be entertained by Miss Ashley. But as I am an old woman, and have always known you, you must allow me to say that I think it is neither pleasant nor right for Miss Ashley to have no companion but you. Many girls would feel it. I don't know whether she does; she has seen little of the world. But lookers-on feel it for her.'

'In short, Mrs. Strange,' said Randal good-humouredly, 'you will have her, whether I like it or not. I must say, however, that I don't think the world's opinion matters much up here at Pensand.'

'That is a most dangerous doctrine,' said Mrs. Strange. 'But I was talking of my own opinion, not the world's, though I have no doubt it would agree with me. Yes, you must let me have her; and she must stay with me till your father is down-stairs again.'

'You are very hard upon me,' said Randal. 'Does Mr. Strange always do as you tell him? Yes? I should think he did. You will let me come and see Mabel, I hope?'

'Certainly,' Mrs. Strange felt obliged to say. 'I shall be happy to see you.'

After this Randal rang the bell, and sent Stevens to look for Miss Ashley.

Both Mrs. Strange and Miss Northcote were shocked at the look in Mabel's face, when she came into the room—it was so wild, sad, and hopeless. There was even a sort of puzzled terror in her eyes, as they wandered from one to the other. To meet them both, the representatives of two claims upon her, was almost too much for her self-command. And the kindness of Mrs. Strange's manner made things a little worse. As for Kate, Mabel just took her hand, blushing deeply, but without looking up to meet the smile that perhaps would have told her how much Kate knew. She sat down near Mrs. Strange, wondering what would happen next, and resolving once more to give no sign that she regretted that letter to Anthony, which of course had brought his mother. She had been expecting somebody from Carweston all that day. It was very good of Mrs. Strange to come herself, and Mabel felt safe at least, as she sat near the little lady who had pressed her hand with so much kindness.

'Mabel,' said Randal, 'Mrs. Strange is going to take you away.'

Mabel just lifted her eyes to Mrs. Strange's face, her colour deepening. Mrs. Strange did not quite understand the look.

'I want you to come and pay me a little visit,' she said. 'Miss Northcote is staying with me, so it will not be dull for you, and I shall be so glad to have you. Will you come back with me now?'

'O, thank you; I should like it,' said Mabel.

She turned her head slightly towards Randal, who was looking at her. It was difficult to be-

lieve that he would let her go so easily.

'It will be a charming change for you,' he said. 'My father will miss you, but he would like you to go, I daresay. As to myself, the less said the better. Mrs. Strange has just pointed out to me that I must not be selfish.'

'Thank you. Then I shall be very glad,' said Mabel to Mrs. Strange.

She was vexed that she could not accept the kindness a little more heartily. Was it not exactly what she had been longing and praying for yesterday? What she had done her best to bring to pass? Ah, well, whatever happened, it could not be so bad as staying here.

Mrs. Strange herself was puzzled and disappointed by the girl's manner. So was Kate Northcote, who had never cared for what she saw of Mabel, but who naturally thought that the near prospect of freedom from Randal Hawke and Pensand might have brought a smile and a ray of brightness to those downcast eyes.

When Mabel was gone to make her preparations, but not till just before she came down again, Randal said to Mrs. Strange,

'I suppose the presence of another lady would make it all right for her here?'

'Well, yes, of course,' said Mrs. Strange.

'If I find that my father dislikes her being away, I will find a *chaperon*,' said Randal.

Mrs. Strange looked at him rather doubtfully.

'You had much better leave her with me as long as possible, Mr. Hawke.'

On the whole Randal behaved very well. He only said to Mabel, as they were getting into the carriage, 'Good-bye. You won't forget your home.'

'I am not going so far away,' said Mabel.

Both Mrs. Strange and Kate talked to her, as they drove along, but without getting much response from the melancholy girl.

'Well,' thought Mrs. Strange, 'I fetched her to please Anthony, and I hope he knows how to manage her.'

'I suppose Dick knows the art of bringing smiles into that dismal little countenance,' thought Kate Northcote.

How much and how often Mabel had longed to turn in at those old Carweston gates, to be a guest even for an hour in that long gray house clothed with ivy! She was there at last, but it was with a feeling little short of misery that she looked up and saw Anthony standing at the door, holding out his hand to help her from the carriage.

'Here she is!' said Mrs. Strange cheerfully. 'Now, Anthony, she depends on you for a great deal of amusement. What are you going to do first?'

'I shall give her a cup of tea,' said Anthony. 'Afterwards, if she is not tired, I shall show her my garden; she has often shown me hers.'

He looked grave and kind, but Mabel would not meet his eyes. She might, if she had known the true sympathy that filled the heart and soul of this lover of hers. Still she struggled with herself, and when they were in the drawing-room she really was able to look round her, and admire all the lovely things she saw there. Kate came to her assistance, pitying what she supposed to be the girl's extreme shyness, and as they sat at tea there was quite a pleasant little talk about old china, kept up chiefly by Kate and Mrs. Strange. Mabel felt that Anthony was watching her, and only

wished she could sink into the earth; it now seemed to her a most dreadful and unwomanly thing to have written that letter. She must have been mad yesterday, she thought. To-day it seemed as if she would rather endure any horrors, even being married to Randal—but no, no! At last, thinking of the shocking thing she had done, thinking of Anthony with misery, of Dick with something like despair, the girl lifted up her eyes and looked at Anthony, the cause of all this trouble. He caught the look, and it told him, if he needed to be told, that Dick Northcote had spoken the truth to him that morning.

‘No more tea, Mabel?’ he said. ‘Then come into the garden now. There is a bowling-green, with an arbour at the end of it all covered with yellow roses and an immense scarlet geranium. Anywhere but there the contrast would be horrid.’

‘Don’t expect to see a lovely garden like Pensand,’ said Mrs. Strange.

‘She will like it much better than Pensand,’ said Anthony.

It was very frightening, but yet it was a relief, to leave the others behind and go out alone with Anthony. She felt that what she had said to Dick last night was true, he was nicer than anybody else. He did not try to make her talk, but went on himself, discoursing in his old familiar way about the trees and the flowers, showing her the long green walks that he loved; the clipped hedges, the sundial, the borders of old-fashioned flowers growing rather wildly, but sweet and graceful in their wildness.

‘When I am in the garden,’ said Anthony, ‘I like to forget that I am in the odious nineteenth century. Almost any scene in

history or romance might have been acted in a garden like this, as Shakespeare knew very well. His garden scenes are delicious. What do you think of my bowling-green?’

They stood at one end of a long level space of velvet turf, bordered by rows of great elm-trees, already beginning to show signs of autumn in their gilded leaves. Far away at one end there was a low gray wall with creepers trailing over it, a crimson Virginia creeper reigning over them all. Close by where they were standing was Anthony’s flowery arbour, which strewed the grass with rose-leaves. There was a matted seat in the arbour, and a rustic table; they went in and sat down there. Mabel felt as if she could not have walked about any longer. She leaned her elbows on the table, and shaded her eyes with one hand. Anthony leaned back and looked at her. He saw that she was trembling from head to foot.

‘Mabel,’ he said, ‘you have trusted me so far; can’t you trust me a little further?’

‘How could I?’ said Mabel, under her breath. ‘Too much already!’

‘Don’t say that,’ said Anthony. ‘I don’t think so. I had your letter this morning, my child. It was beautiful of you to write it; but I shudder to think what you must have gone through before you were driven to it.’

‘O yes, you understand that!’ exclaimed Mabel.

‘Indeed, I do. The recollection of that letter will always be a happiness to me, in one way. It shows how you believe in your friend. But, Mabel, I have a confession to make—a frightfully awkward one.’

There was something so strange, so sweet, in the tone of his voice,

that Mabel could not help looking at him.

'Yes; I did a horrid thing, my dear. I burned your letter. Well,' Anthony went on, after a long pause, 'I had some good reasons. I thought it was better for us both. I am always forgetting my age; not that I am really old, you know, but my mother has often told me that I have not the ways of a young man. So it was not fair that I should ask you that. And then, besides—may I go on a little further, Mabel?'

Mabel's face was hidden in her hands. It seemed as if no girl had ever had to go through such a scene as this, and it was agony to remember that she had brought it on herself by her mad impatience. What was Anthony going to say next? She felt that she could not look up or answer him.

'I have made a discovery,' he said, 'and I want to tell you what

it is. There is somebody else who cares for you, my child. I don't say more than I do; but a fitter person, I suppose, and he thinks you like him. He told me all about it this morning, which was the best thing he could have done. Was he mistaken, Mabel? just tell me that.'

'No,' Mabel breathed out under her hands. Then she suddenly took them away, turned her flushed face to Anthony, and spoke bravely.

'I do assure you, when I wrote the letter to you, I had no idea of that. I know now it was a very wrong thing to do; but I only thought of your goodness and kindness, and how safe I should be. I never understood about him till he came last night—and we talked in the garden—and I told him I was engaged; but he couldn't help seeing—'

'Don't explain any more. I understand it all,' said Anthony.

A SUMMER OUTING IN JAPAN.

AWAY from the glare and noise and the dust of Yokohama during this brilliant beautiful weather; away to some sequestered village amongst the great goblin-haunted hills, or to the health resorts nestling by the side of hot mineral springs, or to one of the pleasant spots on the coast where the air is pure and fresh, and the sky blue and cloudless. Anywhere away from the clatter of brokers' traps, the howling of the coolies, the harsh chatter of mercenary Chinamen, collars, etiquette, and Mrs. Grundy.

So say and sigh during the month of July many of our countrymen exiled in the fair romantic land of Japan; and the result of this very universal saying and sighing is a general exodus from the settlement on the shores of Yedo Bay. Resolved to go, the pleasurable difficulty arises of picking and choosing from the *embarras de richesses* presented. Granted that one can go unhampered by social or business ties, that one's health is good, and it will be found a difficulty not easily to be disposed of, so dazzling are the various paths of attraction open to inspection. One may pack up a few necessities in a knapsack, put on an old knickerbocker suit, fill one's pockets with a sketch-book, smoking implements, and paper money, and start forth to explore; wander away from the beaten tourist tracks, along byways leading to quaint old-world towns and villages, as yet unoperated upon by the great wave of modern civilisation;

roam amongst the mountains, famous for their legends and superstitions; take the railway to the capital, and spend a pleasant week or two amongst the monuments of the mighty past which still crowd it; or hire a junk and coast away down to Kobe and on to Nagasaki through the peerless Inland Sea. These and a hundred other baits are held out to the jaded seeker for tranquillity, change of air and scene, and amusement.

But we do not want to make a toil of a pleasure by performing long journeys and roughing it extensively; so we decide to spend a week at the solitary isle of Inoshima, but a few miles from Yokohama, yet one of the most beautiful, healthy, and romantic spots in this beautiful, healthy, and romantic land.

We need order but a few essential stores to be put up and sent forward by coolies; for Inoshima is well furnished, and the frequent European visitors there have created a supply of the common articles of European food equal to the demand. A 'jinrickisha' takes us away from the objectionable suburbs of Yokohama, and lands us in front of a huge temple fane, where the country real and unadulterated may be said to begin.

The road, as befitting the country, and in keeping with the poetry with which we wish to invest everything, is rough and uneven. Brawling torrents rush along on each side, spanned now and then by quaking wooden

bridges. Right up to the clear blue sky on either side rise hills whose sides are clothed with the wild luxuriance of vegetation so charming in Japan: thickets of delicate bamboo, intermingled with the deep red of the azalea, the more delicate hues of the cryptomeria, the occasional sparkle of the camellia, and the deep sad green of the hardypine, most weird and poetical of Japanese trees. Away over the narrow stretch of paddy-fields in front, rising over distant billows of brown, green, and red, standing grand and solitary against the sky, appears the cone of Fujiyama, the Peerless Mountain. As one gazes on the scene, one stops involuntarily, and drinks in the first draught of the pure holiday air. And then we stride on, past scattered cottages, wherein the hardy ever-industrious women are spinning coarse garments or making rush baskets, where the bronzed urchins are rolling in the sun, and the poor naked labourer is resting a while from his toil in the paddy mud for a drop of tea and a whiff of tobacco; past rude rustic temples, approached by winding paths, indicated by great arches of wood or stone curiously carved; now mounting, now descending, always with the same glorious view of earth and sky spread around, until we strike the Tocaïdo, the great main-road, at the long straggling village of Totsuka. There is but little to detain us here. Hordes of Sunday visitors of the worst quality from the European settlement have long since robbed Totsuka of whatever was once there romantic and original. The children as we pass shriek, 'Tojin baka!' ('Beast of an invader!') and run away at full speed; the very dogs growl and bark as we approach; the inhabitants have grown so accustomed to foreigners

that they scarcely deign to raise their heads, and give us the ordinary civil salutation of 'Good-morning.' So we hurry through Totsuka along the great main-road, once the scene of many a stirring event and glorious pageant in the old feudal days, now an ordinary commonplace—although in certain districts beautiful—road, stretching from the eastern capital to the western.

Four miles further on and we reach the extensive village of Fujisawa—in the old days, as the great tea-houses on either side of the road still attest, an important halting-place for the retinues of the great lords on their journeys through the country. Now it is dull enough. A somewhat picturesquely-situated temple at the entrance to the village arrests the attention for a minute; but the inhabitants are as morose and uncivil as those of Totsuka; so we willingly turn off the road, and, passing under a huge stone porch, follow the well-beaten track which leads to the beautiful island of Inoshima.

As we advance, evidences that we are approaching the coast grow more and more distinct. Trees are few and far between; the rough boulders, which have been playing havoc with our feet for so many hours, are superseded by thick deep sand. Wayside shrines and hill temples become numerous; for we are nearing one of the sacred spots of Japan, and for hundreds of years the weary feet of pilgrims from every part of the country have plodded along the route we are now following. We purposely skirt the seaside village of Katasi; for it reeks with evil smells, and the inhabitants are familiar with the language and manners of the worst types of English and American tourists; and we find ourselves, just as the

sun's rays are beginning to lose their strength, and as the air is becoming tempered by the cool breeze of evening, on the sea-shore.

Well may the Japanese be proud of this bit of scenery, and class it amongst the seven great views of their land. In front, standing out of the sea, just as Mont St. Michel stands off the Norman coast, rises the densely-wooded many-templed island of Inoshima; behind which, and on each side of which, stretches the deep-blue expanse of ocean. To our right, over a purple range of hills, rises the beautiful cone of Fujiyama; and to the left wanders a bold coast outline, with a shining belt of sand, upon which the waves incessantly beat. If we are fortunate enough to escape tourists and hordes of dirty pilgrims, at first sight it seems the *beau-idéal* of a holiday resting-place; so we give our knapsacks a hitch up, and cross the narrow spit of sand, covered at high tide, which connects the island with the mainland.

Once in the quaint little tea-house, standing aside from the rough beaten village street, hidden in its own little grove of trees, and we feel that our holiday has actually begun. How sweet and fresh the air seems! How quiet and sequestered the spot! How 'dimly religious' the fading light! as, after a hearty meal, we stretch our willing limbs on the soft white mats and puff at our pipes, we watch the fishermen and women returning from their toil on the sands below, we listen to the gentle tinkle of temple bells summoning folk to vespers, ever and anon a snatch of wild song or the mournful notes of the national guitar reach our ears, and it is hard to think that rowdyism and European snobbery can ever pene-

trate here, as it often does during the fine summer and autumn months, although confined to the hours of daylight and to Sundays, and rarely extending to evenings or week-days. One by one the sounds cease and the lights fade from the windows, night steals on, and not unwillingly we turn into our soft clean quilts and are soon asleep.

Then the exquisite delight of awakening the next morning with the enchantment of the new scene spread around like a picture of Arcadia. Long before the earliest Yokohama servant has dreamt of leaving his bed, we have thrown open our shutters to let in the glorious flood of morning sunshine and the faint fresh smell of the sea, have slipped on a few clothes, and are off to the shining sands and smooth shelves of rock for a plunge. Red jellyfish and floating garbage need not be apprehended here, as in Yokohama bay. We tumble in head first, and disport ourselves in the clear cold blue water with the genuine delight of boys let loose from school. Then for a run on the sand, and breakfast, after which we have a long bright day before us. This we may pass in a dozen different ways. We are in duty bound to explore the Holy Island itself first; so we start in the lightest of flannels for the dark romantic cavern, within whose depths sits enshrined Benzaiten, the Japanese goddess of the sea. Hither during the pilgrimage season resort hundreds of all sorts and conditions of men from the remotest parts of Japan; and here, under the very nose of the goddess, dwell a tribe of small amphibious boys, who, at the sound of a foreigner's voice, rush forth, and, unimpregnated with the odour of sanctity, offer to dive or swim any distance for a small coin. Or we may climb about the

many tortuous pine-hidden paths, leading away to countless shrines and temples, some pretentious with gilding and ornament, others mere shanties of red painted wood; but all very sacred, and all tenanted by filthy old priests who clamour for alms. Or, weary of almsgiving and tramping over sharp-edged boulders, we may seek some sheltered ledge of rock away from the path, from which we may lazily watch the ever-industrious fisher-folk toiling far beneath us in the bright sparkling water for their daily bread; or feast our eyes on a view of sea, hill, and dale unequalled in Japan, and perhaps unsurpassed in the world. Thus we may linger through a day of quiet and rest, feeling already ever so much percent the better for the change of air and scene, dropping into our tea-house whenever we feel inclined for a cool nap or refreshment, independent of the whole world, and complete masters of our own movements. Moreover, we are in classic land, and, by crossing the narrow spit of sand connecting Inoshima with the mainland, may wander away in half a dozen directions over a country bearing the same historic relation to the rest of Japan that Greece does to the rest of Europe.

Hard by once stood Kamakoura, the holy city *par excellence* of Japan, holier than even Kiyoto; for before Kiyoto was built Kamakoura was in the full tide of her wealth and power. A few grand old temples, and the foundation-walls of many others are all that now remain. The sea-breeze sweeps over the site of bustling streets, and mourns fitfully through the long avenues of pine-trees which still mark the approaches to shrines famous once through the length and breadth of the land. There is a strange sad-

ness and desolation about Kamakoura, which contrasts markedly with the gaiety and animation of the villages and towns scattered about. Tourists have given a spurt to the business of the tea-houses; but during the long summer days the artist or the searcher after the romantic and picturesque may ramble at will about the large deserted courts and offices of the great temple dedicated to the war god of Japan, Hachiman, without meeting half a dozen people.

About a mile from Kamakoura, nestling in a grove of huge trees, is the colossal statue of Buddha, whereto a very pleasant excursion may be taken from Inoshima. Writers on Japan have made this trip so familiar that a description here would be superfluous; but the oldest of Yokohama settlers need never tire of following the well-known route, and 'lying off' for an hour or two under the shade of the most wonderful work of art of this art-loving people. Here in the complete solitude, with the murmuring trees on three sides and the great calm serene giant smiling on the fourth, with the beautiful sky above, the jaded merchant or the ardent student of Japanese romance may find his most exacting ideas of peace and quiet realised. Approach not too near the statue, for the Browns, Joneses, and Robinsons have cut, chalked, scrawled, and painted their names and sentiments over every inch within reach, and sensibilities are likely to be wounded by the presence of such traces of Vandalism in so sweet a spot. Go not on a Saturday or Sunday, for pic-nic parties abound there, and we may be sickened with the sight of a party of half-drunk sailors or low-class tourists making the day hideous with their shrieks and songs.

But get away quietly during the middle of the week ; start from Inoshima in early morning, and enjoy the quiet and peace of the place safe from interference, wander about the once sacred groves, and make the old priest tell the legends attached to the building of the great Buddha.

In all directions there is something romantic, something beautiful, something pleasing to see, and by far the pleasantest mode of making a holiday fruitful in delightful associations and reminiscences is to shoulder one's pack and to wander away at will. In Japan the explorer and wanderer away from the beaten tracks sees far more than the tourist who follows the cut-and-dried routes ; for the very charm of the country and its inhabitants is their eccentricity, and the abundance of startling or pleasing effects where they may be least looked for. Along the coast one may roam for miles and miles, stepping out briskly on the hard firm sand, invigorated by the fresh open breeze, and gladdened by the sunshine and gaiety of all around. There are numberless subjects for the pencil of the artist in the little fishing villages scattered about : the great picturesque junks high and dry on the shore, or lazily dancing at anchor close off the land ; the bright-eyed bare-legged women with their baskets of fish ; the sturdy bronzed fishermen mending their nets, or chattering and gesticulating in groups ; the flocks of naked big-headed urchins sprawling amidst old anchors, piles of cordage, and weather-beaten wreckage. Let the traveller behave properly, and he will be treated with all civility

by these rude simple dwellers by the sea. The best room in the humble inn, the best and simplest of cooking, the most willing and attentive service, may be obtained at the smallest of prices, and with it all the brightest of smiles and the utmost readiness to do all that is required ; so that this aimless roaming forms one of the pleasantest features of the brief holiday.

And far away inland amongst the many-coloured hills, through the great woods of sweet-scented pine or graceful bamboo, along the rocky margins of brawling torrents, by pleasant valleys of waving green, the same air of peace and solitude remains supreme. Life jogs on just as it has for hundreds of years, undisturbed by innovations or by the effects of the bad side of civilisation so called, and the pervading atmosphere is that of dreamland. In the little heavy thatched temples, hidden amidst dense groves of trees, one may always be sure of a night's accommodation and simple rural fare. The priests, more intelligent than the ordinary run of rustics, are invaluable as cicerones and repositories of quaint old-world lore ; and although their inquisitiveness about matters European may be at times a little tiring, one overlooks it in the very simplicity of their questions and answers.

So one may linger dreamily or actively, as one chooses, through the short span of holiday. The result is always the same : renewed health and vigour for work in the bustling Mrs. Grundy-ruled settlement, and a sighing that so pleasant and instructive a time has so quickly flown by.

H. F. A.

A FRENCH EXPERIENCE.

CHAPTER I.

'BUT French girls are so doosid slow to talk to!'

Dolly Crawford, a little shrouded figure sitting on the flabby deck of a plunging Channel steamer, heard the withering dictum of this announcement, and raised her eyes to take a considerative look at the speaker. It was a tall limp young man, with weak whiskers and undecided shoulders, who was standing near her, chewing the end of a dog's-head walking-stick; and the remark was addressed to a most pronounced specimen of the English school of fast young lady, who—tall, straight as a grenadier, erect, and lanky, in brownish ulster and Cambridge hat, likewise chewing the end of *her* walking-stick—looked considerably the more mannish of the two. You may see hundreds of such young women—worse luck!—on any given Channel steamer you choose to travel by; you may meet them—more's the pity!—at any railway station or hotel at home or abroad; you may run against fifties of them—alas!—in any known quarter of Europe or America—nay, even Asia and Africa too, for aught I know—such is the alarming increase of the genus in those perplexing days of the Woman Question. They seem, I grieve to say, as the type of all that is startling and *pas comme il faut* to their continental sisters; they certainly are the abhorrence and avoidance of the more right-minded of their own; and as for the opinion of men—

Dolly Crawford, I say, listening to the appalling ultimatum above recorded, wondered in her mind whether she too would soon be obliged to indorse young Oxford's observation; for she is on her way to spend some time among the very class so maligned. She has four young brothers and sisters at home, and a not over-strong widowed mother. She is full of the determination to learn as much French as she possibly can in return for her own English, as then she will be able perhaps to enter on a remunerative engagement on her return. She has heard, through friends, of a desirable French family willing to receive her; and she is now on her way, a little nervous and trembling, it must be confessed, to enter it. She is twenty-two years of age, and not what would be called exactly pretty, perhaps, though very 'taking' in her own little round caressing way; but she is considered quite capable enough to fight her own way alone in the world, though it must be confessed she would give anything at this moment not to be forced by circumstances to do it. However, as every one says, it is nothing very formidable—only to teach English to and companionise a girl of her own age, an only daughter and an heiress, living in a pretty town in Normandy; and many girls would jump at such a chance. Dolly's spirit did 'jump' at it—only, as I said, her flesh was a little fearful: but she will get over that. To distract her thoughts she further observes the two in front of her.

'How d'ye mean?' asks the

Cambridge hat, in answer to Oxford's late remark, as it fixes a penetrating 'Don't-take-me-in' sort of eye upon its companion, wheeling round upon him on one heel to do so.

'Why, don't you know? they haven't got two ideas of their own, or so you'd think, at any rate; but see them afterwards, some time when mamma's back is turned, and, O my! don't they flirt their heads off just! Now, give me a jolly downright sort of English girl, who says what she means, and then, you know, you know what you're about.'

'Hum, is that your own experience, Charley? Do the French young ladies fire away on you, then? Shouldn't I like to see them!'

Oxford frames his mouth into a dubious expression intended to convey much or anything, and looks away with simpering eye over the billowy expanse of churning waters with modest deprecation. It is not for *him* to boast of Parisian eyes of favour; and, after all, is he not speaking to a simple English girl? He turns the conversation.

'I say, Bessy, aren't you rather hungry? Wouldn't you like a chop or some oysters, or something?'

'Oysters! No, I should think not! If you want anything, go down and get it; I want a constitutional.' So saying, Cambridge thrusts her cane under one arm, and, burying both hands in capacious pockets, turns to walk up and down the deck with vigorous action.

Dolly detaches her attention to other quarters.

Two or three limp and lanky young ladies are seated huddled together in shawls and waterproofs afar off; a few stout papas and mammas are reducing refractory children to order; five or six elderly young ladies (evidently literary) are studiously buried in

periodical literature; three bearded ulstered bachelors smoke cigars on the hurricane-deck. Dolly soon gets tired of it all, and, if it must be confessed, also a little queer. She is no heroine, this young person, and so retires down-stairs to try to forget her woes in sleep. Six or seven hours pass thus; when a tremendous bumping and thumping of heavy articles overhead and ringing and clanking of chains announce the arrival at port. The horrible thud-thud of those tiresome engines ceases, steps hurry overhead, hoarse calls in French and English are exchanged, and, lo, the Channel voyage is over.

'Ere we are, miss!' announces the friendly stewardess, popping her head in at the door. 'You had better come up on deck.' It is the last English voice Dolly hears, for as she ascends on deck, lo, she is in a new world. A motley crowd is assembled on the pier to watch the landing. Lively swearing porters in light-blue trousers, with sun-burnt faces, and black moustaches whose heavy sweeping curves would not disgrace the most elegant of our cavalry officers—who does not know the difference between a French and English moustache?—pour down upon them, and, after the fussy ordeal of the gendarmes is fairly over, deftly pick up the luggage and deposit it, with many gesticulations, on the various vehicles. The stout papas brandish umbrellas and get purple in the face under the effort to make those confounded fellows understand their destinations; the stout mammas, as well as the preservation from a watery death of six out of the eight children will allow them, kindly bring to bear the aid of female and British eloquence; the limp young ladies, each in an ulster and capacious hat at the back of her head, place flat thin

feet on the causeway and skip ashore; the bearded bachelors throw away cigar ends and languidly follow. Dolly, if she had had the experience of six months later, if she could have viewed this scene with eyes made clear by the needle-like incision of French vision, would have laughed heartily at the complete picture of this most 'English' company; as it was, tired and a little lonely, she had only energy to pack herself away in a corner of the huge omnibus, and direct them to take her to the railway station as soon as possible. There in due course she arrived, having only been charged seventy-five centimes too much for her one little box and self—but *que voulez-vous? c'est une Anglaise*; and in five minutes more was speeding along through a softly rich country, the abode of fertility and peace, towards her destination.

In about another hour it was reached. Ten minutes more and she is rattling along high, narrow, irregular streets; past funny-looking little shops, which she afterwards discovered contain the very gem and acme of taste in their various commodities; up a straight formal road, bordered with little toy elm-trees, and between every two the railed *grille* of a shut-in mansion,—up this road, I say, for fifty yards, and then, clack! the vehicle stops short, the driver jumps down, opens the door, and prays Madame to descend. Poor little Madame does so, and gazes in a bewildered sort of way at the iron-work huge door in the wall, through the interstices of which a paved court, filled with greenery is visible. The driver pulls a bell, is paid his fee (double), and drives off just as the big door opens and the *bonne* arrives. A French *bonne*! Who does not know that perfection in maids (to look at) which those words conjure up? Black-eyed, rosy,

smiling, with neat hair smoothed away under the crimped and spotless 'bonnet,' the loose jacket, the black-stuff petticoat, the snowy apron, and the sunbeam smile—all these return to me and to many at the name. Eugénie hopes Mademoiselle 'is not too fatigued! *Dieu, que c'est un long voyage!* but she must be well tired,' and so chattering conducts her through the green court in at the hall-door, where all is spotless purity and *ciréd* barrenness. François is sent to fetch the box. At the noise, the stir of their arrival, the parlour-door opens, and a sallow-faced black-haired fashionable lady of about forty-five presents herself; behind her a stout gentleman with a red face and white moustache; behind him again a tall young lady in faultless black costume. All three are immensely polite and welcoming. Madame takes her hand, and, drawing her into the *salon*, seats her next the fire; Monsieur places a footstool, and is sure she must be tired, very; Mademoiselle looks sympathetic, but says little. Dolly is tired and exhausted and hungry; and it is a fearful effort to her to respond to all this palaver and amiability. She can hardly speak any French either, which is very embarrassing, and it is so stupid to keep on smiling and saying, 'Non, O non, merci,' or else, 'Oui, Madame,' *ad nauseam*. Seeing this dilemma, Monsieur gallantly throws himself into the breach.

'I not speak *Inglisch* much, miss,' he observes, bowing and throwing open his hands before a very large black-silk waistcoat; 'but I speak it one leetle. I most 'appy to speak it you *always*.'

Dolly thanks him and tries to feel as grateful as the obligation demands. Before the day is over she has reason to thank Heaven that the other members of the

family do not share the paternal accomplishment, for the floodgates once set open, the old gentleman's obligingness on that head knows no bounds. She is taken presently up-stairs to a neat little bare chamber, containing a bed by accident, and washing accommodation out of absence of mind, or so it appears, from the draped concealed appearance of the one, and the ridiculous smallness and scantiness of the other, shut away in a mahogany chest, in the lid of which a small looking-glass is fixed. But over the magnificent *cheminée* is another and a most gorgeous affair, all gilt and ornamentation; lovely lace curtains drape the windows, and the pattern of the dark-blue paper matches everything in the room, even to the penwiper on the *secrétaire*. Dolly is more than content, and, once rested and refreshed, the elasticity of youth reasserts itself, and she is quite inclined to be in love with her new surroundings. *Le dîner* is now ready, and she is handed in by Monsieur with every mark of deference, and seated at his right hand. There is *bouillon*, of course, and after it, stewed filet de bœuf, exquisitely tasting and tender; then a boiled fowl and some wonderful sauce; then pears, apples, creams, cheese, biscuits, Bordeaux, coffee, and liqueurs—all the while much talking, exclamation, and enjoyment. But every hot course is served out on tiny cold plates; there is only one fork used throughout, and—O horrors!—not a potato even! Plenty of salad, and more than plenty of salad-oil; but every one knows that that only refrigerates a not over-hot plateful at first, and of course one has to get used to it. Dolly, however, is not very particular—indeed, I fear the tenderness of that filet is wasted on her—and takes it all in good part as 'novelty.' Monsieur

spreads his *serviette* over his chest and enjoys a good dinner; Madame wipes her fork on hers, and ripples over with small talk; Mademoiselle, being as yet only a *jeune fille*, takes no active part in the conversation, but trips about when anything is wanted, and holds her tongue. Eugénie the *bonne* forestalls everybody's wants. It is all so simple, so unpretentious, so well-bred, so foreign, and so amusing, that Dolly is charmed. She is ready even to forgive Monsieur when he sucks his fingers, when dinner is over, and then wipes them on the indispensable *serviette*. She affects not to see Eugénie wipe the custard-spoons on her apron, and re-present them for confitures. It is all so primitive, so simple, and so French, she adores it already.

In the *salon* after dinner, Madame, who is by way of an invalid, reclines on the sofa; Monsieur remains in the *salle* with a cigar (*sic* she afterwards discovers); Mademoiselle, in a gentle limp sort of way, devotes herself to her amusement. She is tall, this Mademoiselle, and, for a Frenchwoman, thin; she is plain, decidedly, being fallow, like her mother, with too pronounced features and not over good teeth; she carries more than her real age, partly through delicate health induced by an indoor life, and, if she were an Englishwoman, would probably be placed past recall among the category 'uninteresting,' and, later on, 'maiden lady.' Being French, all this is redeemed by a certain vivacity of dark eye and crimped hair, faultless dressing, and regulated movement of body and limbs natural to her race. Dolly did not dislike her; nay, as she said to herself, perhaps in time might even grow fond of her. In the course of the evening she left the room, evidently a concerted arrangement





DOLLY'S FURY.

See 'A French Experience.'

with her mother, and Madame raised herself on the couch and opened battery on Dolly.

'You will see, Mademoiselle, that our daughter is extremely delicate; her health is not strong at all, at all; she needs care and study. It is for this reason we have sought a young girl to be with her, to companionise her, to direct her in fact, for my own health is not equal to the effort. Our doctor, an excellent boy, he said to me only yesterday, "Madame, what Mademoiselle requires is fresh air, cheerful companionship, amusement; give her these, and she will be strong." But there, what will you? My good young lady, I have not the health or the time to give her all this. It is you therefore who will be kind enough to do it. You, who are so capable, you will read with her, you will teach her English, you will walk with her, you will play duets together, you will, *enfin*, be friends together; for she loves you much, she has told me so already, and it is a charming thing that kind Heaven has sent you to us.' Here she paused out of breath, and Dolly struck in: she would be very glad to be of any use to Mademoiselle; she would do her best.

'It is not for the sake of the English only, Mademoiselle, that you have been good enough to come to us; O no, for that M. Delmaine is perfectly equal to teaching her, and, indeed, has often, often talked of doing so. He reads and translates your language beautifully, beautifully; but he is scarcely equal to the fatigue in fact, and it is a young girl of her own age Louise requires. She is exceedingly clever, my daughter—O, quite advanced. She is accustomed to think and act for herself quite in the *English* way, I tell her; for, you know, your young girls do as they choose

more than ours, my dear Mademoiselle; it is the spirit of your nation. M. Delmaine says it is the spirit of Protestantism; but that I know nothing about. We, however, we hear they do, and Louise is wild to go to England. But for that, I tell her, she must wait—wait a little—until, perhaps, somebody else takes her; for, my dear young lady, I will now tell you a little piece of news you ought, perhaps, to know in advance. It is that our daughter is affianced—yes, affianced, to an excellent partner—*un bon garçon tout à fait*—one who will make her exceedingly happy. He resides in this town with his only sister; he has a charming house; it is an excellent marriage. You will see him soon; but he is now in Paris on some business; he will be home in a week, then we shall be happy. But Louise, believe me, will not consent to be married immediately; no, figure to yourself that she refuses to listen to his representations, to all our representations; some young girl's folly or other. O, she is very *entêtée*, is Louise; but she says no, wait a little; and he, he is an angel, he waits. I tell her it is monstrous conduct; but she persists, though he is most attentive. We have had so many demands for my daughter; but M. Delmaine has refused them every one but this one, because M. Emil Gérard is an excellent *parti*, and such an excessively good *garçon*. But I tire you, my good mademoiselle; you have need of your bed; go, I implore of you; do not make the ceremony; go to your room, Louise will conduct you.' And Louise coming in at the moment, followed by her papa, all three joined their entreaties that Mademoiselle would have the goodness to repose herself after the terrible fatigues of her long journey.

'We have the pleasure you show our pretty town-morrow the morning, my good young lady,' cries Monsieur, coming very near her and smelling horribly of smoke. 'Me take you show ze lions, ha, ha, ha!' and he rubs his hands and shows much baldness of head as he finally bows his farewell ceremonies at the door. 'Une charmante petite fille,' he says, returning to the bosom of his family; 'n'est-ce pas que nous avons bien fait, nous, ma femme?'

Madame and Mademoiselle were quite of the same opinion.

CHAPTER II.

DOLLY opened her eyes the next morning to a day of brilliant sunshine. And sunshine was in her thoughts as well. How pleasant is that stolen five minutes of morning reverie snatched by the wicked from the righteous toil of daily duty! Talk as one may against the iniquity of the thing, the laziness, the selfishness, the idleness, and the other sinful *nesses* that all pious folk tell us the practice involves, who does not know the content, the peacefulness, and the calm enjoyment of that five minutes, blessed beyond all the other five minutes of the day? It is then that luxurious recollection of the past day's doings visits one; it is then that soothing plans of the approaching one are mentally mapped and made. I am not, I fear, among the pious folk, for I love my morning dreams dearly. And Dolly's were tinged with hope and youth. She liked these good, fussy, kind people. She felt equal to the task lying before her. She was full of golden visions of emolument awaiting her at the end of this experience. She thought her-

self a most fortunate girl. After all, things go by comparison. Here was this French girl, with a moneyed future before her, engaged to be married to a charming man, no little growing-up brothers and sisters to think about, no cares of any kind, but taking it all so placidly, and not even seeming the happier for it! Well, it was a queer world. Little Dolly had no fortune that she had ever heard of coming to *her*, unless it dropped upon her one fine day from the skies; and as for a lover,—well, she had had her little fancies, as what other young woman already arrived at the age of two-and-twenty has not? But two out of the three were as poor as herself; and the third, after nearly breaking her heart by doing everything *but* speaking, suddenly went off and emigrated to Canada without so much as a good-bye. That was nine months ago now, and Dolly is determined to have nothing more to do with the faithless sex, either mentally or morally, but to live out her life, and do her duty in it as faithfully as she could, and not trouble her head about so visionary a thing as happiness. How many people set out on the same virtuous determination! And how many, alas, narrow down at last to the direful prose such determination too often ends in! But when Fortune *will* step in with fairy favour, and suddenly gild the gray horizon, how astonishingly soon the sons and daughters of Duty accommodate themselves to the golden change! Full of the first virtuous reflections, however, our little Anglaise descends soberly to the *salle*, and is received by Monsieur with happy flourish of trumpets, and the remark that 'the morning sunshine has arrived.' How embarrassingly fond of compliments is this amiable gentleman! Dolly can hardly hinder a smile as she

regards him. Monsieur is attired in a gorgeously flowing flowered dressing-gown, a yellow-silk handkerchief round his neck, and his feet thrust into green-and-gold slippers. He explains that Madame's health is so unfortunately delicate as to forbid her descending so early, and that she *déjeunes* in her own room. 'Ma fille,' however, presently enters, just as faultlessly dressed as on the previous evening, and the three partake of *café au lait* and bread-and-butter. The second *déjeuner* is at twelve o'clock, and until that hour the two girls retire to a pretty little morning-room, and commence their studies. Mademoiselle is painstaking and persevering, not by any means clever; Dolly is very earnest and unselfish. The two make rapid progress, at any rate in each other's acquaintance and good opinion, if not in English prose, and both are equally surprised at the rapidity with which *midisounds*. By that hour Madame is in the *salle* all ready to receive them, but clad in a wondrous *peignoir*, and in a state of incompleteness as to coiffure which much shocks our Dolly, who is not yet used to French ways and appearances. But Madame's health again is so delicate, so very delicate, that she never dresses herself before the afternoon, and she hopes this kind young lady will excuse her! So saying she wipes a soup-plate with the ever-useful *serviette*, and proceeds to serve the soup. English eyes open a little more over this second meal, but still there is a glamour over everything. Monsieur, it is true, has the reprehensible habit of taking snuff between the courses, and is very noisy over his *Bordeaux*. Madame carves the fowl on her own plate, Dolly is nearly sure with her own knife; all three elevate their bones, and unmistakably enjoy them *aux doigts*. Still, the kindness and the hospitality

are unflagging, and the stranger is made to feel most thoroughly at ease. Monsieur is excessively curious about English habits and customs, about the relation of which he proceeds to question Dolly, much as one might a native from the utmost region of Kamschatka.

'You love your Queen in England?' he asks, as, the weightier labours of the meal over, he helps himself with finger and thumb to a very big lump of sugar, and meditatively stirs his coffee. 'You fear not the Revolution?'

Dolly thinks on the whole not; on which he launches into unbounded admiration of so extraordinary a country.

'It is a good thing there are no other gentlemen here,' whispers Mademoiselle, smiling; 'my father *surexcites* himself always in talking politics with them; but my mother and I fortunately are of the same opinion with him.'

'Yes, Mademoiselle, we are all Legitimists here, and we are not afraid to say it; for me, I desire but one thing—that all Republicans should be guillotined, ha, ha!'

'Calm thyself, calm thyself, my dear,' says Madame languidly; 'my nerves are but feeble, and to-day is my "reception," thou art aware.'

'Great Heaven, *ma femme*; thou hast reason. I grieve for that, because I fear these poor young ladies must remain within to-day in consequence!'

'It would be but polite,' says Madame; and so, accordingly, it is arranged, to Dolly's great disappointment. Nevertheless the afternoon proves sufficiently amusing. An hour later, Madame descends in faultless violet-and-black cashmere; Mademoiselle in gray. The *salon* is arranged for visitors, with all the wool-work armchairs in a circle under the chandeliers, footstools before each, and a general air of elegance and ceremony

falls upon the entire household. Madame Delmaine's weekly day of reception was an important affair in the town. Dolly, intensely interested, but a little nervous, awaits the opening of the drama; she feels horribly 'English' and in the way, and is destined to feel still more so as the time goes on, so voluble, so vivacious, so loud, and so alarming does the company strike her; but fortunately everybody has such a wonderful amount to say that nobody pays much attention to her. That is what strikes her more than anything—the astonishing volubility. One would think all these dear friends had hardly met for six months, instead of being in the daily habit of seeing one another at intervals; but the repartee, the sally, the news, the challenge, and the counter challenge, roll so deftly from one tongue to another that it is impossible to catch the half. While she is answering one remark half a dozen others have intervened; and at last she gives it up in despair, and thinks never, never will she understand this most confusing of languages. She is presented with great ceremony to each individual member, and all make some courteous remark; but most, after a while, attributing her quiet answers to English gravity and spleen, turn their attention to each other. Dolly is but too grateful for this, and would have given anything, I think, to have only listened to the scene from one of Madame's *armoires*. She noticed that all the young ladies spoke little; that all the young married ladies were very gay, and talked and laughed much more; that Monsieur did the gallant to every fair dame in the room; that all the gentlemen were polite to a fault; but that the innuendoes and the conversation (half at least of which she lost) generally took a

turn which would have raised the hair on many pious English heads. But when she found courage to raise her eyes to observe the effect of these various remarks, none was to be seen—simply none; a glance, a pause, and the idea is lightly shaken off, to give place to the next comer, on the thistledown surface of fairy wings. There was one lady there who immensely interested, and it must be confessed rather repulsed, her. She was the wife of the Colonel of the regiment then quartered in the town; a plump pretty-looking woman of forty, with rouged cheeks and ringlets of glossy black hair, on the top of which a lace hat was coquettishly placed, under the raised brim of which two large black-and-white daisies nestled caressingly; she carried in a well-gloved hand two lovely hothouse flowers; a beautiful little foot reposed, well in sight, on her tapestry footstool. Dolly noticed all these minutiae thoroughly; she could not take her attention off this novel specimen. Look where she would, she saw the flashing eyes, pearly teeth, and *mignonne* features of this most attractive-looking personage, and heard the loud laugh and brilliant sally which kept pace with her appearance. Madame St. Pierre, she afterwards heard, was a Bretonne, which fact appeared to excuse much license in Norman eyes, and was acknowledged to be the prettiest woman in the town. Dolly saw and heard quite enough to sober her. M. le Colonel did not put in an appearance; but Madame found quite enough to amuse her in a couple of junior officers, who were no doubt paying devoted court, vicariously, to their commander-in-chief. Report said the Colonel, who was sixty, and as yellow as a guinea, from a long course of Cochin China, was furiously jealous. Next la Colonelle

was a small, spare, wizened little lady, of dejected expression and much repressed demeanour. Dolly took a vast interest in her as she caught the name, 'Mademoiselle Gérard;' but she was positively over fifty and excessively plain. Many inquiries after her brother elicited the news that he would arrive home in three days. Not a muscle of Mdlle. Delmaine's face moved. One would have said she had not heard the announcement.

'What an icicle!' said Dolly to herself. But a few minutes afterwards, when the conversation turned upon a poor man who had been run over in the street and nearly killed, leaving a wife and two little children, among the many 'O ciels!' and 'Mon Dieu, que c'est donc horribles!' which flew around, her lips only were silent, but her eyes were full of tears.

The company kept streaming, streaming in, and Madame's little *salon* became full to overflowing. Madame herself, elegant, sparkling, and amusing, kept up the ball of conversation as only a French hostess can, and Dolly arrived at the conclusion that probably her nerves and her health were alike put off and resumed at pleasure.

'She's a humbug,' said stout little Dolly to herself, with British candour.

Yes, of all the family she liked Mademoiselle the best. See her now, politely answering that very foolish elderly gentleman, who evidently, as his manner indicates, is pouring into her ear an interminable string of profuse compliment and flowering jargon; but she is only just enduring it, that is all, and Monsieur had better take his wares elsewhere.

'Do I adore flowers? Ah, Mademoiselle,' he is saying, in a sort of ecstatic rapture, 'I only adore one thing—woman, amiable woman! But yes, still I love

flowers; they are emblems to me of love and pleasure.' In this way the amiable fool is running on, to Dolly's intense amusement and Mdlle. Delmaine's intense disapproval, when the door is suddenly thrown open, and an astonishing event descends upon the company. Coming hastily in, puffing and panting, but still with a certain ponderous dignity of carriage, is an immense individual, clad in thick greatcoat and woollen scarf. He carries in his hand an umbrella, which nearly drops to the ground as he blankly surveys the company.

'Ah, great Heaven!' he murmurs plaintively, 'if I had not forgotten it is the reception-day of Madame!' Then hastily recovering himself, with true French vivacity he advances smiling towards the hostess. If *chère Madame* will excuse a giddy traveller for thus intruding? For his part, he is truly grateful to have the opportunity of meeting so many good friends. *Chère Madame* most certainly has already done so, for she advances towards him in a sort of rapture, extending a welcoming hand which is devotedly saluted. Then Monsieur comes forward, and—yes! the two men absolutely embrace; at which Dolly can hardly restrain a smile, for both are enormously stout and very nearly of an age; and then he turns to Mademoiselle, who is quietly standing up to receive him, with the faintest of blushes on a grave face.

'May I be permitted?' he says, and bends over the long fingers. Mademoiselle colours up and looks disapproving; mamma hastens to the rescue and applies a hundred questions. This, then, is the lover! Yes, this is M. Emil Gérard, who has unexpectedly finished his business in Paris sooner than he expected, and hastened home on

wings of rapture to greet the family of his beloved.

By this time the room begins to clear—even Mademoiselle Gérard, who, perhaps, has not appeared as overjoyed to see her brother as might have been expected, has taken a frigid leave—and the family are left to entertain the new-comer.

‘Will you take a friendly dinner with us, *en famille*?’ asks Madame, beaming from her daughter to him and back again.

Monsieur Emil is overjoyed, charmed; but Mademoiselle does nothing more than faintly echo the polite invitation. He is presented in due form to Dolly, and is charmed, enraptured, to have the happiness of meeting her; he seems already to claim a sort of possession over her; for is she not a belonging of his angel? Then he retires into the vestibule, and divests himself of his *paletot* and mufflers, and comes back beaming, holding several parcels in his hands, besides an enormous bouquet.

Dolly now takes a quiet survey of him, and is almost appalled at what she finds. Well, he is perhaps a few inches smaller when out of his greatcoat, but still what one could term nothing else but enormous. Big every way—immense shoulders, short arms, large head, no neck to speak of, bald—yes, bald, and moreover so ridiculously like M. Delmaine that she no longer wonders at the coolness of his *fiancée*. M. Delmaine’s moustache is white, and M. Gérard’s is grizzled, that is all the difference; there can hardly be ten years between them; and both are so absurdly fat and smiling and uninteresting, that it is a great trial to her self-control to see them bowing to and complimenting each other.

What Dolly especially disliked of all in poor M. Gérard was perhaps his boots, which were of a light-brownish yellow (the tops),

and laced up the side, but perfectly fitting and, for his size, excessively small. Glancing next at his hands, however, she almost transferred her disapproval towards them—so large, so soft, and so ‘plummy,’ were these ugly extremities, and garnished with horribly long filbert nails.

Poor Mademoiselle Delmaine! Here, indeed, was a rent in her rosy future which no imagination could get over, and the four little brothers and sisters at home seemed gilded in comparison. Poor M. Gérard, little cognisant of the unfavourable impression he was making, blithely undid his paper parcels, and, laying them open on the table, placed the bouquet in the middle, and offered them all figuratively at his lady’s feet.

‘See here, what magnificence! The kind thought of our excellent friend. My Louise, art thou, then, not happy?’ cries Madame, clasping her hands in a rapturous ecstasy, and lifting grateful eyes to heaven. But Louise is not by any means so overcome with gratitude as duty expects of her.

M. Gérard has gone up towards her, and is attempting to conduct her forwards to the inspection; but she resists, and a few low hasty words of conversation pass between them. Dolly heard a snatch or two of it.

‘I forbid you to do so; I am annoyed; I am in anger,’ murmured Mademoiselle hurriedly; and, ‘But you will pardon me, my angel; I could not help it,’ came from him. Then she slowly and impatiently came forward, and looked down at the presents with pouting lips.

‘What will Mademoiselle say to me?’ she says, half laughing. ‘She will think I am a baby with all these toys;’ and she disdainfully lifts a coral necklace from its case.

'But ah, heaven, it is lovely! Great skies, how it is superb!' cries Madame. 'Mademoiselle can but think thee a very fortunate young girl to receive so many kind presents. What an *agrafe*! Figure to thee, *mon cher*,' turning to her husband, 'an *agrafe* set in amethyst! And here is a fan the most exquisite. *Mon Dieu*, what a fan!'

In this way Madame gloated over the treasures so despised, and I think she was right. They were indeed excessively pretty, and all in good taste. There happened to be two little brooches in the form of keys, one in silver and one in black and gold; both were brought for approval. Mademoiselle was to choose which she preferred. She hesitated a moment, beckoned to her mother, and whispered a few words. M. Emil was called to the consultation, at which he assisted by many emphatic nods, bows, and assenting smiles. Then he looked towards Dolly, and beamed approval as Madame came forward and addressed her.

'My daughter begs to speak to you, Mademoiselle,' says Madame graciously; and M. Emil gallantly hands her forward.

'If Mademoiselle will do me the honour to accept this little trifle,' says he, holding up the black-and-gold key-brooch, 'it will afford me the most great happiness, and I venture to suggest it will also do pleasure to her friend;' and he glances oglingly at his *fiancée*, who looks at Dolly and says, 'Certainly yes,' with the kindest of smiles.

How good, how kind, they all are to her! How she loves this amiable family! She accepts the brooch, blushing, and wears it down to dinner in a pretty lace cravat, which provokes general admiration. M. Gérard's, indeed, is rather marked; he stares at her more than a little; but Dolly knows

it is on account of her relations with his lady-love.

She is asked to play after dinner, and does so. M. Gérard is also a musician; performs, indeed, on the flute, and adores the art. Here again is another bond of union. His *fiancée* is awkward at the piano, and can never be induced to play before any one. Mademoiselle must draw her out—must make her play duets. 'She will soon make progress with so charming a mistress.'

'Mademoiselle, sings she at all?' asks M. Delmaine, beginning to air his one accomplishment of language among all this talk of cultivation.

'A little, Monsieur,' says Dolly.

'O, den she will be enough good.' Monsieur runs to the piano and opens it once more. He can see that his son-in-law is more than struck by this unlooked-for evidence of skill; M. Emil indeed stands open-mouthed, staring at the fair performer. 'Dank you, mees,' comes presently from his parted lips; and at the sound it is Monsieur's turn to stare.

'*Vous parlez Anglais*, Gérard?' he murmurs helplessly, leaning against the piano for support. '*Mon Dieu! Mon Dieu!*'

'O yez, O yez. Von leetle, my friend,' returns M. Gérard; and he grins an awful grin at Dolly, and makes her, of course, a bow.

It is more than Dolly can stand. 'O dear, whatever am I to do,' she says to herself, 'if these two awful old men are going to pepper me always with their English?'

The ludicrous view of the case is quite lost on practical Miss Dolly.

'What, then, Emil also speaks the English!' cries mamma, enraptured. 'Great Heaven, but that, then, is magnificent! O my Louise, that you will have happiness in speaking together!'

But Louise looks terrifically

severe at this suggestion, and it is M. Gérard who has to respond to the raptures.

'M. Gérard will be so happy—O, so happy—to accompany this charming family to view the beauties of the town to-morrow!' And, in fact, does so, though Mademoiselle hardly speaks a word to him all day. Perhaps she was tired from the effect of her morning exertions; for Dolly, on coming down to breakfast, had met her in company with Eugénie entering the front-door from a walk. It was from Eugénie they heard that Mademoiselle had been to visit the hospital, to see the poor man who had been so severely hurt the day before, and had spent nearly an hour by his bedside, seeking out and relieving his wretched family on the way home. Anyway, she has not much gaiety left for M. Emil. But he does not seem to miss it. He laughs and chatters gaily to everybody, and looks a great deal more often than is at all necessary at Dolly, and quite makes up for others' silence.

M. and Madame Delmaine fortunately cannot walk far, and the expedition soon comes to an end. Dolly has been shown the town-hall, and walked round the Jardin des Plantes, and admired the lovely view from all parts of the heights, and then they come in.

M. Emil's reward is an invitation to dinner again, which it is needless to say he accepts. Dolly thinks of the poor little frumpy sister mewed up all by herself at home, but nobody else seems to do so.

CHAPTER III.

AND so the days go on, and Dolly gets more accustomed to the odd, rambling, pleasant life,

and more to understand the limits of her duties. Mademoiselle she begins to grow really fond of; for the French girl, once over her shyness, begins to open out and show depths of real character and genuine affection. She, on her side, gets very fond of Dolly, and the three morning hours of study become hours of pleasure to them both. Not that she makes very much progress in her English. Dolly is in despair sometimes over those dreadful *th's*, and then the irregular verbs. She makes the most terrific faces over her efforts, and Dolly bursts out laughing, as our insular manner is, and Mademoiselle joins her, and the lesson becomes a joke; but still, Rome was not built in a day, and while there is life there is hope. And they have serious talks too sometimes; Mademoiselle is inclined to confidentialise.

'Do you ever marry gentlemen old enough to be your fathers in England?' she asked one day, at the end of the lesson, just as they were preparing to put up.

'Well,' said Dolly, considering, with the dictionary in her hand, 'I don't think we do often; not unless we love them, any way.'

'Love them!' echoed the French girl. 'What has that to do with it? My mamma says young girls should never *love* their *fiancées* before marriage; it would be a thing the most indelicate!'

'O,' says Dolly, 'French and English ways are so different. It's no use arguing over them. We never marry in England unless we love; at least, very seldom—only in the great world.'

Louise sighed deeply.

'Ah,' said she softly, 'if I lived in England!' After a pause, 'Would you advise a girl to marry if she did not care for a monsieur?' she asked.

'That depends,' answered Dolly,

'if she thought she ever could grow to care for him.'

'But if she felt she never could?'

'Then, certainly not. Better live single all her days.'

'But if it were the wish of her parents! If it were but a self-sacrifice, which our Church tells us is so holy?'

'No, no, no!' cried Dolly, with energy. 'Let her never listen to such a creed; it is throwing away two happinesses instead of one.'

But our Dolly had not much experience of these things, and spoke like the impulsive young creature she was. They were soon called to *déjeuner*.

'Here is a delightful project,' says Madame, as the soup goes round. 'We are all asked to spend the day in the gardens of the Château Montmorenci on Wednesday. It will be a charming day. Our good Emile has brought us tickets of entry; he will come with us himself, and Mademoiselle *sa sœur* also. Is it not amiable?'

'Very, very,' answers Monsieur, in the silence of the others. 'Yes, yes, we will have a charming day; we will show Mademoiselle the beauties of our landscape. You love the country?' he asks, turning towards Dolly. 'Ah, I thought so. She loves the country. We will all enjoy ourselves.'

Mademoiselle said never a word.

M. Gérard came in the evening, fat and beaming as ever. It was arranged they were all to drive to the Château at one o'clock on Wednesday in two carriages.

Dolly was almost angry with her friend when she found that, through her contrivance, when the time came, it was Madame Delmaine, herself, and *le fiancé* in one *calèche*; and his sister, Louise, and her papa in the other. But she was still more furious with M.

Gérard when she discovered that, far from his resenting the arrangement, on the contrary he rather seemed to approve of it, to judge from the alacrity with which he helped her into the carriage, and the unctuous way with which he then proceeded to seat himself opposite, and let his eyes fix themselves upon her. Her disapproval of him began to change into aversion, which she took at last no pains to conceal; but the only effect it appeared to have upon him was to increase his ponderous efforts to please. Madame Delmaine at length appeared to notice something strange; for, immediately on arriving at the entrance to the Château, she arranged that the two girls should walk a little in advance alone. Dolly, only too thankful to escape, kept so close to her friend that there was no separating them; nor did she have any more of Monsieur's unwelcome attentions until collation-time at four o'clock, when they all assembled in a room at one of the lodges to partake of *pâté* and Bordeaux. Then again she became the victim of his increasing gallantries; and it was with unconcealed satisfaction that, after the meal was over, she succeeded in again separating herself with Louise, under a pretence of 'sketching' the very beautiful scenery which surrounded them. Louise could not sketch, but she stood watching with unfeigned interest the pretty drawing of a wing of the Château and background of noble chestnut-trees, which was rapidly growing into excellence under Dolly's skilled little hands, until a sudden accident threatened to put an end to the work of both performer and onlooker. The two girls were bending their heads closer together for a better inspection of the work, when a despairing exclamation from one broke the spell.

'O ma chère! See, I have upset your little water-can!'

The water was indeed all soaking into the rejoicing grass at their feet, and what was to be done?

'I must go and fetch some more,' said Dolly, rising, and laughing heartily. 'The good woman at the lodge will give me some, I have no doubt.'

'No, do let me!' eagerly interposed the other; and before she could be stopped she had seized the little bottle, and was off.

Dolly repeated herself, with a sigh of relief, and gazed at the beauty around her. How calm, how peaceful it all was! She fell into a reverie, which, however, did not last very long, for a thick shadow presently stood beside her; and there was M. Gérard, big, placid, and oily as ever. She was beginning to hate him.

'I fear I have had the misfortune to disturb Mademoiselle?' says he, in his softest accents. 'I come from Madame to announce our departure. She said I should find both you young ladies together.'

'O yes,' says Dolly, jumping up, and beginning to collect her materials in a great hurry. 'Did you not meet Mademoiselle? She has but this moment left me.'

'No. Ah, what excellence! Allow me;' and he takes the little drawing in his hand, darting a swift look intended to captivate. It only enrages her instead; but what can she do? She cannot snatch the drawing from him, and there he stands, still holding it, and consequently detaining them both.

'It is time to go,' she says impatiently at last; 'they will be waiting for us. Please give it me.'

'And what if they are waiting?' says M. Gérard coolly. 'Is it not of more importance to me to be speaking to you, you beautiful

English one, whom my eyes must have told I admire?'

She could hardly believe her ears. Was this indeed Mademoiselle's lover speaking?

'O,' she cried, shrinking away from him with instinctive horror, 'Monsieur, you must be mad! Hold your tongue this instant even!'

Rendered thus in English, the *taisez-vous à l'instant même* seems stripped of its command, and reduced almost to the ridiculous; but in French the words were accompanied with an imperious gesture which fully matched them. He seized her hand, and tried to kiss it, but Dolly, snatching it away as hurriedly, first turned upon him in a kind of fury, and then, not trusting herself to speak, rushed away in a white heat. M. Gérard laughed, stooped down, and, picking up her paint-box, nimbly followed. He was a Frenchman, and Idaresay accustomed to such scenes. But the two had not gone many paces ere Madame Delmaine, suddenly coming into view, caught sight of the position in all its ambiguous bearings—Mademoiselle l'Anglaise, with angry face, running away, and her future son-in-law, cool and smiling, behind. But Madame was too true a Frenchwoman to have seen the affair. Not a ruffle disturbed the serenity of her rouged face as she politely saluted the pair; not a tone of her voice altered as she inquired of Dolly her success in art. Only on the way home it was somehow arranged that Louise and she exchanged places, in spite of the former's open objections, and Monsieur was *not* invited in to finish the evening.

And from that moment Dolly felt herself watched; watched as she had never before been in her life; watched covertly in a manner which made her blood boil

over even to think of. Yet what could she do? She dare not do what she would have wished—go openly and tell Madame or Mademoiselle about it. No, no; she felt she dare not. And so she went on from day to day in a miserable sort of state, sometimes longing she could go away—nay, almost resolved upon finding an excuse for so doing—and among all her incertitudes, only resolved upon one course of certain action, viz. that of completely avoiding the odious cause of her embarrassment. But this was not quite easy to do; for M. Gérard so pursued her with attentions, and so pestered her with amorous glances, and so thoroughly ignored all plainly-shown dislike to such proceedings, that it could no longer at last be kept a secret; and Dolly one fine morning determined on leaving her comfortable quarters.

With this end she made use of a conveniently-arrived letter from home, and announced the urgent need for her presence in the family circle with a sinking heart.

Alas, Madame only shrugged her shoulders, cast up her eyes, and observing, 'Mon Dieu, Mademoiselle, que c'est triste! mais s'il faut?' continued her soup.

Monsieur made many ejaculations of despair, and looked at his wife for further orders.

Mademoiselle got very red, murmured, 'Mais, mon Dieu, que ferons-nous?' and then cast her eyes on her plate, and grew very silent.

Dolly saw it was a hopeless case, so continued with a brave face but heavy heart:

'Yes, yes, I must really quit your kind roof. I am sorry, but my mother wishes me to come home, and at once. There is a steamer to-day, I think, from —, and I will pack my boxes at once.' And directly *déjeuner* was over she left the room.

Well, it was all over, this happy French life, and now she must go back again to home-worries—nothing else for it; and a thousand anathemas were hurled at the offending head of the unlucky cause of her misfortunes. Then she set to work to repack her dresses, and arranged them, with many a heartache, in the old black trunk of English make and London name. As she was folding up the last a knock came at her door, and Mademoiselle entered.

'But this news is sudden,' she began, eyeing nervously the preparations, and in a constrained voice. Then flinging aside her ceremony manner, she went up close to Dolly, and clasped her two hands together on her shoulder. 'O my friend,' she murmured, in a choking odd sort of voice, 'I know what is driving you away; it is monstrous! it is horrible!'

'Do you?' said Dolly, gazing blankly at her, all her innocent little subterfuges destroyed. 'I beg your pardon, indeed I do; but it is not my fault.'

'I know it; I see it. But O, my dear friend, how I thank you for it!'

'Thank me for it?' echoed Dolly.

'Yes, thank you for it. You have relieved me of a nightmare.'

'What, then, she loves him after all!' said Dolly to herself.

'For my parents see it, we all see it,' went on Mademoiselle hurriedly; 'there is no longer any need for concealment; all is, all shall be, at an end between us now!'

'What? you mean to say you intend to break with M. Gérard?' asked Dolly, stupefied.

'But yes, certainly.'

'But—but tell me, Louise, did you love him?'

'Love him!' echoed the French girl, with contempt on every feature; '*Je le déteste!* Ah, mon Dieu, what am I saying?' she cor-

rected herself hastily; 'the saints forgive me for that.'

Dolly impetuously kissed her.

'Then never marry him, dear,' she said.

'But I never mean to now; my parents will see it. Ah, my dear, from what a fate have you not saved me!' and she heartily returned the kiss.

Then she went away, and Dolly finished her packing, and in an hour's time her adieux were said, and she was on her way once more in the wide world. She quitted — with terrible regret. As she got out of the train at the seaport whence the steamer started, a flushed and stout form descended from another carriage.

'Ah, dear miss,' it said as it hurried towards her, 'we meet again! I heard at the house of your unfortunate departure, all alone, and I hastened to be able to offer my services to assist you on board your *bâteau*.'

'And did you tell Mdlle. Delmaine you were coming?' asked Dolly, in a freezing tone, the only resource left her.

'But no, I did not mention that,' he stammered, as he offered to relieve her of her cloaks and bags.

'Thank you, Monsieur, I require no assistance whatever; and allow me to add, I think this persecution most ungentlemanly and cowardly,' in grandiloquent tones.

'But, Mademoiselle, listen, for one instant only. Persecution you call it? Nay, if you can but see the ardour, the true admiration with which I regard you! One instant I beg of you!'

They had got into the waiting-room by this time, which was empty. Monsieur was quite ready to take advantage of the situation, and accordingly seized her hand, and was about vehemently to embrace it, when Dolly turned upon him in a fury.

'How dare you!' she cried, her eyes kindling—'how dare you! Do you think I don't know the relation in which you stand to Mdlle. Delmaine? I am ashamed of you!'

'Mdlle. Delmaine? Ah, la pauvre petite! c'était bien une affaire de convenance, ça; mais c'est vous, c'est vous, chère petite, que j'aime.'

But Dolly, staying to listen to no more, flew away, out at the door, down the passage, and straight into the first 'bus she could find, with a speed born of terror, disgust, and sense of the ludicrous combined. She alighted abruptly upon an old gentleman's feet, who mildly withdrew them and made way for her at his side; and fortunately the 'bus that instant moved off and saved her. The last object she saw was the rueful figure of poor Monsieur, holding her umbrella still in his hand, and agonisingly scanning every fly and vehicle but the right one, in search, doubtless, of his charmer. Dolly, although she certainly regretted the loss of her umbrella, could now only laugh in her sleeve, and wonder if he would take it back to Mademoiselle.

TWO YEARS LATER.

Dolly safely reached her home, our readers may be glad to know, but is no longer Dolly Crawford. Six months after she was in England she received a letter from Canada, stating that the writer at last found himself in a fair way of making his fortune, and hoped his dear Dolly had not forgotten him, although he *had* found himself too miserable to bid her good-bye. It was her old lover come back to her. And Dolly had not quite forgotten him, and now is very happy indeed under the guise of a Canadian farmer's wife.

She gets occasional letters from her friend Louise Delmaine, who is still (according to her own wish)

unmarried, and likely to remain so. A month after Dolly left, the town was much electrified by the announcement that Madame St. Pierre, the dashing lady of the Colonel, had eloped with—M. Gérard! Report added, to escape a tyrant husband; but I doubt

myself whether the poor lady had not exchanged one tyrant for another. M. Delmaine still sends his respectful homages to the most fascinating of 'Anglaises;' but I do not think Madame has quite sufficiently forgiven her to add hers.

THE COURSE OF COURTSHIP.

I wooed my love with sweet gifts from the candied store,
When I had eight, she seven, summers seen;
Until her paling cheek declined all off'rings more,
And I did fear my suit had fatal been.

I wooed my love with apples from my garden tree,
When she eleven, I twelve, years had passed;
Until my little Eve did check my courtesy,
And tearful vowed that she had ta'en her last.

I wooed my love with verses from my am'rous quill,
When fifteen she, I sixteen, winters knew;
Until my Laura bade my ardent Muse be still,
And from her tuneful Petrarch bashful flew.

I wooed my love with trinkets of the goldsmith's art,
When she nineteen, I twenty, years had run;
Until my credit failed the promptings of my heart,
And all my money, not my love, was done.

I wooed my love in polished periods of prose,
When five- and four-and-twenty years we reached;
Until she fixed her eyes upon her beating toes,
And asked me where I learned had to preach.

I wooed my love with wealth and carriages-and-pairs,
When five years more had aged us lovers both;
She wanted rank and station, and, assuming airs
Of Clara Vere de Vere, to wed was loth.

I wooed my love with titles, orders, wounds, and fame,
When half a century had o'er us rolled;
But now she called bright honour but an empty name,
As, devotee, her beads she hourly told.

And now I woo my love with memory's regret,
For I have touched the Psalmist's utmost scope;
And her no thoughts of earth nor of the future fret,
For she is dead these twenty years and more.

CLUB CAMEOS.

The Old School.

THERE are few things more distressing to a reflective mind than the attitude which the Church of England has assumed within the last generation. Disguise the matter as much as we may, there can be no doubt of the fact that the Anglican Church is fast becoming a Romish institution. In spite of the bench of bishops, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the decisions of the courts of law, many of our clergy preach to their congregations the creed pure and simple of the Roman Catholic Church. Enter many of our places of worship in London and in our country towns, and, unless told to the contrary, we might imagine that we were under the sway of the Vatican. The altar is gorgeously draped and lighted; incense renders the air heavy and sickly; the consecrated elements are held aloft for adoration; confession is openly taught from the pulpit and practised in the aisles; the clergy, not content with the title of priest, insist upon the designation of 'father'; banners with strange devices hang against the walls; and forms and ceremonies unknown to the Establishment are freely introduced into the services.

Between Ritualism on the one hand and Research on the other, it seems to me that the dear old Church of England of my youth must fall to the ground. It was once the pride of Englishmen to regard the creed they professed as the best and purest of all religions. It was manly without being destructive; it was Catholic with-

out mummery; it was warmly attached to the State, and its teachers were gentlemen. Can the same now be said of the Church of England? In one parish we see a clergyman ashamed of his garb and his title; dressing like a layman and dropping the reverend; criticising the Bible as he would any ordinary historical work, and dismissing many of what have been considered the great truths of Christianity as unworthy of acceptance by any rational mind. Whilst in another parish we see its vicar acting more like an Italian than an Englishman, and doing his utmost to put down the Protestantism of the Church which he has solemnly sworn to support, and to erect in its place the faith of the Papacy. I decline to split hairs. I know that our Ritualists maintain they are not Papists; but when I see them inculcating the teaching of Rome, issuing little books of devotion coolly plagiarised from those of Rome, and imitating in their ceremonies, their attire, and their institutions the practices of Rome, it seems to me perfectly justifiable to say that they are Italian, and not English, Churchmen.

And it is from the Ritualists that we have the most to fear. The Broad Churchman appeals to the few whose intellect is stronger than their faith; but the Ritualist appeals to that immense class, idle, weak, emotional, in whom the superstitious element is stronger than the intellectual. No one who has watched, even most superficially, the currents of society but

must have perceived how they set, especially among the higher, or, to speak more correctly, the wealthier classes, towards Ritualism. We are living under a plutocracy, and Ritualism is essentially the religion for the rich. In Ritualism plutocracy sees itself reflected: it is the caricature of an ancient faith, as the plutocrat is himself

the caricature of the aristocrat; it is gay and gaudy, and fond of pomp and show like the plutocrat; it is arrogant and self-asserting, its priests concealing their want of birth and scholarship by the robes of sacerdotal pretensions, as the plutocrat himself attempts to hide his deficiencies by the display of his wealth and money power;



it is shallow, unscrupulous, and miserably effeminate. Yet no sensible man can attempt to deny that Ritualism is now an immense force in the country, and one that is daily extending its power.

A society that is rich, that is idle, that has little to occupy its leisure, must betake itself to some form of distraction. Men have their professions and their ambition to engage their minds; but it is upon

the women that idleness falls as a rule with so heavy a hand. Balls, dinners, and intrigue that is politely called flirtation will occupy the leisure of many; still there are others to whom social dissipation is a routine of boredom, and who seek after a more refined excitement. If they have a taste for art, science, or literature, they are fortunate; but these are the exceptions, not the rule. And now it is that

that strange creation of the nineteenth century, the Anglican priest, steps in and opens out a path for work and action. The young woman whose matrimonial chances are not yet decided, the disappointed middle-aged woman, the elderly dame with no domestic cares, all find their allotted labour—a round of ceremonial observances and duties occupy all their leisure. The nineteenth-century dame, be she spinster, childless wife, or widow, need have no cause to moan over the leaden wings of Time. The Ritualist comes to her aid, and *ennui* and inactivity are no more. What with attending early celebrations, matins, confession, vespers, and midnight services; attaching herself to a sisterhood; visiting a certain class of sick and poor under strict clerical supervision; interesting herself in church decorations, pestering her friends for endless contributions, and distributing little works of devotion of an un-English character, the day is, in fact, too short for her—so short, indeed, that she is often unable to assist her mother in the concerns of her household, or to add by her presence to the geniality of the domestic circle.

We are so wealthy that we wish our religion, like our houses and other appointments, to be in keeping. The robes of our clergy must be splendid; and our clergy, who are now for the most part literates instead of graduates, have no objection that the cope should hide the want of the university hood; our churches must be ornate and artistic; we must have music, flowers, banners, elaborate altarcloths, and everything that fascinates the eye and inspires the senses. The old-fashioned faith of our fathers has gone to its rest, and save in some obscure village, where people go to worship and

not to perform, is hard to be met with. Sentimental pietism is now religion; an adherence to a host of silly ceremonial observances stands in the place of duty; and faith is now only another word for a belief in the 'priest.' It is idle to talk to Englishmen of the devotion of the Anglican priest, the purity of the Anglican nun, and the zeal of the Anglican monk now working within our midst. Innovators are always zealous and devoted till their system is established. But we have had the system before; and we know, three hundred years ago, what the priesthood, the nunnery, and the monastic order resulted in. History is apt to repeat itself; we have no wish to see those scenes repeated.

There is one dear friend of mine who cordially sympathises with these views, whom it is always a great pleasure to see at the Caravanserai. Hubert Marborough is a type of the old English clergyman which is, unhappily for us, fast dying out. A man of unfeigned piety, an active yet not fussily inquisitive rector, a good classic, and a most perfect gentleman in all his tastes and feelings, he is the last of that class which Sydney Smith called the 'squares.' A second son, he was destined for holy orders, and was duly installed in the family living of Hottiscombe. Ten years after having taken his ordination vows, his elder brother was drowned with his only son whilst yachting in the Mediterranean, and Hubert suddenly found himself transformed from a country parson, with a living of eight hundred a year, into a squire with a rent-roll of some annual twelve thousand. Many men under these circumstances would have quitted the Church, and have forgotten the priest in the country gentleman.

Not so Hubert Marborough. He exchanged the rectory for the old hall, letting his curates dwell in the house that he had deserted; but he still worked his parish, visited his poor, and preached his sermons as became a man who had put his hand to the plough and declined to look back.

The only difference that fortune

made in him was to extend immensely his powers for doing good. He pays his curates well, neither patronising them nor despising them, but treating them like gentlemen, though he is very particular as to their belonging either to the one or the other of our two Universities, and to their style of reading. He can forgive a young



clergyman a good many things, but he will *not* forgive him for dropping his *h*'s or making a false quantity. He has established a dispensary and a good useful library, in which humorous works are not excluded, in the village. He sees that every cottage on his estate is put into repair, and made not only habitable but comfortable. One of the sternest of magistrates on the bench to the

tramp and the vagrant, his hand is ever ready to alleviate misery and suffering. Nor does he perform his acts of charity by deputy, for none knows better than he how a kind word and a friendly greeting enhance a gift from the rich to the poor. It is his hand that often tucks the warm clean blankets around the bed of the rheumatic peasant, or administers the nourishing soup or the dry

old port to the weak and the sickly. It is his smile and chat that are almost as welcome to the honest man temporarily out of work, as is the little present of ready money. The poor dame, who has just become a mother, knows well enough to whom to apply, if she is ordered by the village doctor what it is impossible for her husband to supply her with. Though an opulent squire, the chairman of quarter sessions, and allied by marriage to a powerful earl in his county, none of the poor stand in awe of him. If they want advice or assistance they scruple less to go to him than to one of the curates. Yet, gentle and loving as is their pastor, they know better than to try to use any of the wiles of the suppliant. In spite of his large heart and intense amiability, Hubert Marborough has a keen eye for character, and can be as repellent as the harshest if he suspect imposition. He is the tenderest of shepherds to his flock, but he is quite up to all the gambols of the black sheep.

Of all the broad counties in England I know no fairer than that of—let me call it—Quartzshire. For the combination of mountain and moor, wood and water, it stands unrivalled. To the artist with his æsthetic eye, its hilly passes, richly-clothed valleys, thickly-timbered forests, and picturesque varieties which the landscape is ever unfolding, are as full of charm as are the well-stocked trout-streams and the wild moorland, broken by hill and dale, to the sportsman. In one of its most lovely spots, watered by the broad current of—let me say—the Mica, and within gunshot of the splendid Knole Wood, stands Hettiscombe, a large white building with columns and porticoes, on the brow of one of the

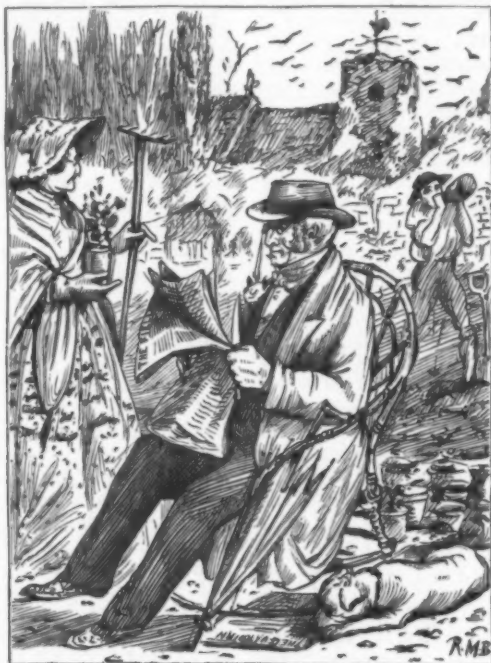
numerous undulations that surround the neighbourhood. A fine park, severed in twain by a lake fed by the river Mica, encircles the house, whilst in the rear is the wood, with its tall waving firs and mysteries of shade. Away in the distance the great upland region of Sleignmoor can be seen, with all its variety of hill and valley, bog and stream; whilst, like Cyclopean castles, the gigantic masses of weathered granite rise at intervals to crown the famous Tors.

Approaching the house, one sees from the balconied terraces and well-kept lawn and gardens that the place is carefully looked after; yet it is not merely as a country seat that Hettiscombe is dear to me. No doubt, amid the stately mansions of this old England of ours, there is many a castle and hall which, so far as architecture, luxury, and appointments are concerned, is the superior of Hettiscombe; but where shall I find such a *home*? Running down from London, with its cynical tone, its artificial pleasures, and its wearying round of excitement, to Quartzshire, no sooner have you passed a couple of days with the family of Hubert Marborough than you look upon life very differently from what you have been accustomed to do in Pall Mall. Perhaps, for the first time, it strikes you that there is something higher than mere pleasure, something nobler than selfishness, something truer and more comforting than mundane philosophy. The manner in which a man brings up his family has always been to me the best test of his character and of the strength of his principles, and I know no more charming sight than the home-life of Hettiscombe. The daughters are simple, well-bred, and unaffected; the sons are free from the

slang of the barrack and the stable; whilst between parents and children, and husband and wife, there is that exquisite harmony of feeling caused by affection, self-respect, and a clear conscience.

A spirit of the most fascinating cheerfulness pervades the whole establishment, and even finds itself reflected amongst the stable-

helps, a notoriously discontented class. The old vicar talks to his wife as if the honeymoon had never dissolved itself into the silver wedding, and the sisters only wrangle amongst themselves in trying to spoil their brothers when on leave from their regiments, or at home during 'the Long.' Though the house is seldom



free from visitors, yet there is no need for the presence of the stranger to give a fillip to the often monotonous round of domesticity. The vicar is quite happy among his books and papers, thinning his trees, cantering about the moorland on his old white hunter, or making a round of calls in the parish. Lady Mary, it seems to me, is never so content as when, in big

hat and gauntlet gloves, she is pottering about the garden, whilst her husband, in the roomiest of Indian chairs, is seated within call, studying the advertisements in the *Field*, or reading the clerical speeches in the *Guardian*. The girls amuse themselves in a thousand ways with a sense of consideration for each other's tastes and wishes not always to be observed amongst sisters; whilst the

brothers seem so proud of the successes of each other—Hal has got the good-conduct sword at Woolwich, Dick has won the cup as best shot at Hythe, Reggie has been complimented by the judge for the way in which he conducted his case—as utterly to preclude all feelings of secret jealousy. When the visitor arrives he is made not only welcome, but feels, no matter how shy by nature, completely at home. Without any fuss or obtrusive activity, he finds the whole family consulting his wishes, laying before him proposals exactly in accordance with his tastes, leaving him alone when he desires, or giving him plenty of society when solitude is unacceptable.

And one of the charms of Hettiscombe is, that you never meet disagreeable people. However cantankerous a man's or woman's nature is, I do not believe he or she could be long in that irritable state under the influence of the cheery piety of the rector, and of the sunny presence of his household. The most suspicious cannot but feel, however much they may differ from him, that Hubert Marborough is a good and single-minded man. Listen to his conversation, watch him as narrowly as you please in all the relations of life, hear him pray and preach, observe the example he sets his family, and you cannot come to any other conclusion but that you are in the society of one who, without a doubt or reservation, believes in the doctrine he professes, and essays to carry out all that it teaches. A Low Churchman of the old school, he is as devoid of the intolerance and acidity of certain of his brethren as he is of the mummery and sickly sentimentalities of the Ritualist. He is an Englishman, with the healthy tastes and aspirations of an Englishman. Old as he is,

there are few men in his part of the county, did he think hunting a sport that became his profession, who are better riders to hounds; and in spite of his waning sight I would sooner back the rector's breechloader to bring down more birds, either in the coverts or on the moors, than that of many a younger man who fancies himself.

He can get on with most people, and long as I have known him never have I heard him utter a spiteful remark or give heed to scandal. Frivolous and malicious gossip he abominates, and its entire absence from the conversation of the household of Hettiscombe is one of the peculiarities of that charming home. Never do you hear any of the slander about the lord-lieutenant, about the bishop, about the neighbouring clergy and gentry and their wives, which forms so large a part of the conversation of the country. The rector's maxim is, if you can say no good of a man, at least say no evil. But there is one class of people he cannot agree with. He sternly refuses to countenance the Ritualists. He can understand, and to a certain extent sympathise with, a man who is a Roman Catholic or a Dissenter or a Jew or even a Free-thinker, but he can neither understand nor associate with one whom he regards as a traitor to the Church of England. To his keen sense of honour it seems inconceivable that a man should continue to draw his stipend from the Church whose teaching he declines to accept and whose discipline he seeks to subvert. It is open to any one who differs from the creed of the Church of England to go outside her pale; but, in his opinion, it is mean and dishonest in the extreme to receive the pay of the Church and to wear her uniform whilst working for the enemy. In

vain the Ritualists around Hettiscombe have sought to convert Hubert Marborough to their way of thinking. His church is sound, solid, air-tight, water-tight, warm, and comfortable; he will not have it 'restored.' Vestments have no charms for him; when he reads prayers he wears his surplice and university hood, and when he preaches he appears in the pulpit in a black gown. He does not believe in incessant church services and in constant celebrations of the Holy Communion; it fatigues the clergy and makes worship mechanical. But he believes in helping the sick and needy, in visiting the widow in her affliction, and in succouring the distressed. When spoken to of the advantages of the system of confession, he mildly replies that he 'has travelled in Italy, France, and Spain, and he has yet to learn that the morality in those countries is superior to that in England.'

During the month of May, when the meetings at Exeter Hall and St. James's Hall are held, my host of Hettiscombe always turns up at the Caravanserai. His figure is quite one of the curiosities of the club. There is no mistaking that tall slender form, now somewhat bowed with age, that high broad-brimmed hat with the healthy smiling face beneath, that frill jutting out of the black sporting-looking waistcoat, till it loses itself within the folds of the capacious white neckcloth; no mistaking that loose untidy-looking black coat, with the side-pockets wide open, suggestive of samples; those wonderful trousers, tight below the knee, yet voluminous enough in all conscience above; those rough cloth gaiters; those thick serviceable shoes! Thus attired, the rector-squire looks the very opposite of many of his clerical brethren, with their smug

suits of shiny black and their atrocious head-gear—a hideous compromise between a billycock and the hat of a cardinal.

There are many married elderly men to whom a run up to London and a fortnight at the club are the most delightful of changes. Not so with Hubert Marborough. As he wanders about the rooms of the Caravanserai, taking up one newspaper after the other, fidgeting about from chair to chair, you can see at a glance that he is not at home. At breakfast the little table, with its bachelor equipments, is a poor substitute for the long broad board at Hettiscombe, with its snow-white cloth and graceful medley of fruit and flowers amid the toast and scones and rolls and the old-fashioned silver dishes. Hemisses, like most men blessed with many children, the talk and society of the family circle; and he says his tea never tastes the same unless poured out by his eldest daughter. When he surveys the daily bill of fare, swinging on its frame, he looks at it helplessly, undecidedly, and is grateful to the butler when he suggests what should be ordered for dinner. He agrees with the Apostle, that a little wine for the stomach's sake is a good thing; and he also agrees with the Apostle that it should be *wine*, and not logwood-juice, or some other vile decoction calculated to give the drinker acute heartburn within twenty minutes. At Hettiscombe he knows he can rely upon the contents of his cellar-book; but the club wine-list is a publication with which he is not so familiar; the names of many of the wine-merchants are new to him; several of the clarets are unknown to him; and as he sips his port-wine after dinner (our ports are *not* famous at the Caravanserai) I fancy he sighs after the vintages he is accustomed

to at home. He declines to take a house in town for the season, because he is unwilling to quit his parish for any length of time; and as his wife and daughters have no fancy to leave the country when it is most beautiful for the dust and heat of London, the rector generally spends his month *en garçon*. Occasionally his family

come up; but after three weeks at Thomas's Hotel they pine for the shade and breezes of their west-country home, and take their departure.

As the club scarcely suits the domestic instincts of my friend, it is very fortunate that he has seldom occasion to find himself within its walls. As a representative



Low Churchman, and one of the pillars of the National, Hubert Marborough is the welcome guest of the London evangelical world. He dines out at sedate mansions, where the festivities of the evening conclude with an exposition of Scripture and family prayers. At evangelical Drawing-Rooms, assembled to encourage missionary or philanthropic enterprise, he often takes the chair, and offers a

handsome contribution to the institution pleaded for when the velvet bag or white plate makes its begging round. He is always one of the speakers at the anniversaries of the great Low Church societies, and has frequently been asked to preach their annual sermon. He is on the committee of most of the religious institutions of his party, and is the president of one or two little benevolent 'homes' and 're-

fuges,' which he has founded, and which, if the truth were known, are mainly supported by his generosity. Young ladies who write anecdotes of the poor, or little stories with a moral, are always petitioning him to draw up a preface, or to allow them to introduce his name, so as to encourage the sale of their literary undertakings. For the rector-squire of Hettiscombe, apart from the sermons and addresses that he has published, is one of the most fertile of the polemical writers of his party. Not a movement is made by the Ritualists but he exposes the danger to be apprehended from their insidious proceedings. No sooner does a freethinking divine indulge in reflections contrary to the spirit and teaching of the Thirty-nine Articles, than the rector of Hettiscombe boldly comes

to the front, and does his best to refute them.

Thus Hubert Marborough, from his social position, his wealth, and his decided views, is looked up to as one of the leaders of his party. His advice is courted by his bishop, and young evangelical vicars and curates decline to form an opinion upon any great clerical question until they know the views of the divine of Hettiscombe. My friend no doubt has his faults, like all of us; but when I compare his exquisite conscientiousness, his single-minded piety, his high tone of honour, his practice to the very letter of all that he preaches, with the life and morality of the rest of the world around us, he seems one of the very few who really deserve that noblest title on the roll of Honour, that of—a Christian and a gentleman.

WALKING PARTIES.

I SUPPOSE that at this time of day it is hardly necessary to discuss the abstract advantages of walking. Of course I do not mean the lunacy of a thousand miles in a thousand hours, but honest, wholesome, rational walking. It is the contemplative man's recreation even more than fishing itself. It is the most lasting and the healthiest and cheapest of all recreations. You may walk down gout and a multitude of ills that flesh is heir to. Some people follow the silly rule that you should never walk if you can ride. The true principle is that you should never ride if you can walk. I expect that in the long-run the pedestrians beat the equestrians and the carriage people out and out. I am sure that this is the case so far as regards scenery and science. The pedestrians can climb and descend cliffs, pass over stiles, wander in woods, find his way to choice nooks where the equestrian cannot follow, and where the carriage is altogether out of the question. You follow the path over the rocks which is only accessible on Shanks's mare. Then again you have all the advantages of leisure. Your stay is little or long, just as you choose, and you are unfettered by the time-table, that drawback to our boasted civilisation. Many people who are solitary in their walks at one time of life become gregarious afterwards. I very much admire the way in which Professor Tyn dal and various members of the Alpine Club have taken solitary walks up Mont Blanc or Monte Rosa. There was a time when I

delighted in solitary walks, was a true disciple of Zimmermann, and endeavoured to realise the fine old saying that a man should never be less alone than when alone. But when once a man has made the deplorable discovery of what nervousness means, there is an end to the intense pleasure of the lonely walk, and he prefers to take his pedestrian excursions in company. A passage in Charles Kingsley's writings quite spoilt my pleasure in mountain excursions. If you happened, he argues, when speaking of some mount or fell, to fall or break your legs, here you might lie until you were covered by the snows, or had your eyes plucked out by the birds. I know from my own experience that going over the Westmoreland mountains in the dark, even in the company of a most trusty friend, and when your nerves and your wind are not so good as they once were, becomes a trying experience to the amateur mountaineer. Indeed it is absolutely necessary in some kind of mountain travel that there should be a certain number in order to minimise danger and equably distribute their strength. In a party of this kind it is necessary jealously to scrutinise the capabilities of each member. The deplorable catastrophe on the Matterhorn seems to have been caused by one gentleman entirely over-estimating his strength and capabilities. In hazardous country you had better do your walking in company, and in any country a walking party has many peculiar claims to be voted a good thing.

Of course the *personnel* of such a party must be carefully considered. The parties may be as small as two or may extend to any number. These, however, are extreme instances. We will therefore deal with our extreme instances before proceeding with the level averages. I was lately talking with a lady, the wife of a very distinguished man, who told me that she and her husband took long-walking tours. They took no other luggage than what they could carry in their pockets for days together, sending on their traps to some central point, from which they diverged in their excursions. Though they had been married for years, they still had so much love for Nature and for each other as to make them look forward to these holidays as the great charm of the Long Vacation. I have met enterprising young couples with alpenstocks and travelling-bags beginning married life as a walking party. Within the last twelve-month a lady has written a book to tell how she and her husband have gone round the world, and another to describe all the drives they have taken. The most simple and natural way of going out walking 'two by two,' the common case of a great multitude taking a walk together, is more and more coming into prominence. We know several archaeological and natural-history societies where the pedestrian party is the great principle of the institution. In the summer there is a field-day once every week. The country is carefully mapped out, all the points of interest within walking distance are noted; the list is gradually cleared off, and when cleared off recommenced from the beginning. The members of these walking clubs become veritable Uhlans from their knowledge of

geography and their skill in pedestrian strategy. Of course the members of such societies have their grand days occasionally, when they invite ladies, and give them champagne luncheons. But when they take their walks into distant villages, the wholesome general rule is not to go beyond the limits of bread-and-cheese and beer. At the universities the practical professors, such as those of geology or botany, often lead their pupils as a body into the country, and give lectures on rocks and plants, to the great astonishment of the bucolic mind that does not comprehend the reason of things. At the meetings of our great societies walking parties have come very much to the front in recent years.

A great deal of character is often brought out in a walking tour. A young lady once told me that, considering the awfulness of the long matrimonial voyage, she thought that a short trial trip should be permitted. I do not know what her mamma would think of such a proposition, but the trial trip of a walking excursion often gives one a remarkable insight into character. If the expedition be of a very prolonged kind, it may break down, as in the case of Burton and Speke in Equatorial Africa. Here is an apt illustration.

Lord Shaftesbury, in his *Miscellaneous Reflections*, has the following amusing story: Three or four merry gentlemen came to a country where they were told they should find the worst entertainment and roads imaginable. One said, 'The best expedient for them in this extremity would be to keep themselves in high humour, and endeavour to commend everything the place afforded! They commended every tolerable bit of road or ordinary prospect,

and found reasons for the odd taste and look of things presented to 'em at table; they ate and drank heartily, and took up with indifferent fare so well that it was apparent they had wrought upon themselves to believe they were tolerably served. Their servants kept their senses, and said their masters had lost theirs.' Lord Shaftesbury has, as may well be supposed, his own political or philosophical meaning, but, taking the story as it stands, it really gives us very good advice. It inculcates the great duty of cheerfulness, of making the very best of things: when you have not got what you want, making the very best of things that you have.

I do not wish to contest that time-honoured aphorism, that two are company and three are not. But there are great advantages in the odd man. You are enabled to gratify either the solitary instinct or the social instinct, as may happen. There is great art in mixing your party properly. One man ought to be well read in the archaeology or natural science of a district. Another ought to have the mind of a poet or the eye of an artist for scenery. Another ought to be a good practical man, skilled in ordering dinners and rooms, and in slanging fellows who fall out of rank.

It is to be borne in mind that if the walking party is large, the commissariat will require some attention. If you diverge out of the beaten path—and this ought always to be an object—you come upon country hospices, which are quite unprepared for the incursion of tourists. The sensible tourist will be quite satisfied with bread-and-cheese and beer; but in remote country districts, *crede experto*, bad beer, bad cheese, and even bad bread are sometimes only to be found, and then only

enough for one. The practical man of the party must look after these details, and be visited with a vote of no confidence if he does not look after them well. On the beaten routes you are always safe for plenty of 'prog.' It is an error, however, to order a dinner by telegraph. The hotel-keeper will think you grand people, and will prepare you a grand dinner, and you will have to pay grandly in consequence. Though you may make pretty safe about the board, you are not equally safe for the lodging. The whole pedestrian party may have to turn into a stable-loft. They may have to lie on straw and be covered with ferns. There will be no toilet requisites for the dandy. But young men are speedily equipped. A plunge in the stream or in the lasher will set them pretty well right. Mr. Pickwick ordered wine for the good of the landlord, and drank brandy-and-water for his own. In these days, however, it is a discarded superstition that you are obliged to call for anything which you do not really want. It is in the evenings when you have had an honest day's trudge and a cheerful meal that the great charm of the walking party becomes apparent. Some weak-minded weak-legged individual—weak legs and weak minds often go together—may fall asleep, but the full tide of talk sets in among good fellows. The great difficulty is to get to bed. Thence will arise the corresponding difficulty of getting up. But those are delightful hours in which we live over again the scenes of the day, and perhaps go back to other days and other scenes. The flood of anecdotic reminiscence after a regular day's talk is very interesting. If you happen to be staying in a country town, it is not at all

a bad plan to go into the bar or smoking-room of the hotel. You will find that all the leading characters of the place drop in, and you may soon gather up the moral topography.

I remember a man telling a curious story of an adventure that befell him and a friend on a walking tour. They were travelling in a lonely part of a seaside country. It so happened that they had looked up an old map, when they found the words: 'Here liveth Squire Brown, and exerciseth hospitality.' It came into their heads that if Squire Brown still was extant they would give him an opportunity of exercising his somewhat primitive and barbaric virtue. They accordingly called one morning, map in hand, and found a very courteous, ruddy-faced old gentleman, who greeted them very hospitably, and said that he should be most delighted to be privileged to offer them hospitality. He himself was just going off to a coursing match, but he would order dinner and beds for them, and hoped that in every respect they would consider themselves at home. An offer so good was not to be refused, especially as Squire Brown's hall was in the midst of very fine and somewhat inaccessible scenery. They spent a very pleasant day, and enjoyed themselves very much, but their host did not turn up, and kept the whole household waiting for him. About three in the morning he came home, with a fine jovial expression, but very decidedly the worse for liquor. I am sorry not to conclude this little anecdote happily, but strong waters are not in accordance with the improved genius of the age, and his guests left him early next morning.

In these walking tours one often picks up interesting stories about

the neighbourhood. Our practical man enacts the part of Andrew Fairservice in pointing out the different places and telling their private history. That house shrouded in woods—there is something weird and wild about them—has a very sorrowful story. The young lady of the house was to elope from it. But the ladder (whether of rope, silk, or wood, I know not) broke, and the poor girl—it was a terrible anti-climax—fractured one of her limbs, and died of the injury. There is a much pleasanter story about another big house in the same neighbourhood. The estate was to be sold by an erratic old gentleman who had spent all his money. He opportunely owned a lovely daughter. There came a young gentleman, gallant and gay, to inspect the house and lands, and of course he married the young lady. So the dreaded sale never took place, and the lands remained in the ancient line. Here, again, is a big house which is widely known to all the beggars round. I have sometimes fancied that I have myself detected a peculiar mark on the gateway, a kind of private signal to the begging confraternity, that they are sure to get something for the asking. There is a very queer story told about that house.

There lived in this house a pleasant fine-hearted gentleman, who had read political economy, and had made up his mind that he would never give anything to a beggar. He agreed with Archbishop Whately, who used to say that though he had done many things which he ought not to have done, and had left undone many things which he ought to have done, he could truly say that he had never given a sixpence to a beggar. To have made the good Archbishop's apothegm perfect

—he himself was one of the largest givers—he ought to have added, ‘without inquiry.’ I can testify from my own experience that beggars very occasionally tell true stories and deserve to be relieved. This gentleman was sitting outside his house one summer evening in an easy-chair, smoking his cigar and partaking of some agreeable iced fluid. ‘To him,’ as they say in the plays, came up the British tramp, a rascal who has always some relieving points in a love of Nature and ingenious lying. He is closely akin to the regular, or rather very irregular, gipsy, who makes professional depredation on stray poultry, and, indeed, does not draw a particularly fine line in whatever he does. In going about the country you will often fall in with tramp or gipsy, and despite Matthew Arnold’s lovely poem of the ‘Scholar Gipsy,’ and Professor Wilson’s personal experiences among them, and also that eminent legal gentleman who married one of the lot and had great reason to repent, I am, nevertheless, deliberately of the opinion that a little of the society of tramp or gipsy goes a long way. The cigar-smoking gentleman, of whom I was speaking, was a kind-hearted man; but he did not love tramps, and he did not believe in relieving beggars. The tramp told him that he was ill and starving; but it was impossible to tell through the fellow’s swarthy complexion whether he was either the one or the other. He refused to give the fellow anything; and only repeated his refusal still more peremptorily when the man persisted in his begging.

‘But you’ll give me a penny, your honour?’

‘Not a single farthing.’

‘Perhaps you’ll give me some bread?’

‘And you’ll fling it away before you turn the next corner. I know you fellows, and I have known that done before now. I won’t give you anything!’

‘Then I’ll just lie down and die.’

‘All right. Do so, by all means. You are quite welcome.’

The squire finished his cigar, and turned in, leaving the man lying on the grass before his house. It is not every squire who would have allowed a tramp to do so much.

But when the squire looked out of his window in the morning, there was the stark, rigid, dead body of the tramp lying at his gates.

He was not to be blamed. He was not unkind, as I have said; and no human being could have suggested that the wretched tramp had told an awful truth.

To the squire the occurrence was a most severe shock. He made a vow that never again would he ever turn his back on any poor man. Any tramp, however transparent an impostor he might be, was never allowed to go away without at least a penny or a crust. So the house was marked and known by tramps as a place where at least something might be got, and it was accordingly honoured by a great variety of callers in that path of life.

On a home walking tour we came in sight of a beautiful house in a fair park.

‘That belongs to Lady Garnham, Lottie Verschoyle that was.’

‘But who’s her husband? I don’t remember any man of the name of Garnham.’

‘No; she is a baroness in her own right. There is rather a pretty story about her and her title.’

‘What is that?’

‘There is no harm in telling it, as nearly everybody knows it.

Lottie Verschoyle was—it is now ever so many years ago—one of the most daring and handsome young women in the country; a splendid horsewoman. She also had a large fortune. This large fortune of hers did her no good, and, as so often happens, had made an old maid of her. She was always haunted by the suspicion, as all heiresses are, that the wooer is making up to the fortune and not to the lady. In those days a royal prince was always hovering about her. He declared he would marry her, whether the monarch would permit him or not.

‘But what about the Royal Marriage Act?’

‘I believe you will find that the Royal Marriage Act does not prevent a marriage, but requires that a twelvemonth’s notice should be given to Parliament of the intention. The royal duke was really very anxious to marry Lottie, and as there was very little chance of his ever coming to the throne it was not likely that any difficulty would ever be raised. His royal highness was perfectly infatuated about Lottie. But he was a man very much out-at-elbows. Both his character and his fortune were in a dilapidated condition. In vain he swore to pretty Lottie that he loved her for herself alone. Lottie did not believe a word of it. She was worth two hundred thousand pounds, and believed that was all that H.R.H. cared for. At last the Prince made her a regular offer in due form, and pressed it with the uttermost eagerness. Then the lady gave him a most direct and unhesitating rejection, and she dropped some expression which gave him to understand that she did not believe in the reality of the attachment which he professed.

‘Years passed by, and, almost quite unexpectedly, H.R.H. became king. He was happily married. He had outgrown the scandals of his earlier days. The gay Lottie had grown a middle-aged woman, and had never been able to relieve herself of the incurable suspicion that men only liked her for her money. One day the king wrote to her and desired her to fix an interview. It was a strange interview. She had outlived her charms and audacity of speech, and he was now a monarch as wealthy as he was mighty. The king told her that a painful impression had always dwelt upon his mind relating to their old days, and that now, looking back calmly on the past, he wished to tell her on his honour that he had acted from no mercenary motives, but had truly loved her for herself alone. The lady was greatly affected. She must have been more than human not to have been moved by the thought that she might have been Queen of England. Then the king said that as a memorial of old days he wished to make her a peeress in her own right, which was done. Then they parted, and met no more. She died an old maid. Indeed, it was not likely that, having been within an ace of being queen, she would ever care for a marriage at a time of life when a mercenary motive would be suspected more than ever.’

My little essay has been so far like the sermons of Bishop Latimer, who used to interrupt his disquisitions by saying, ‘I’ll tell you a story.’ I now revert to the didactic. A few points of practical detail may be noted. A party of four or six, in the hands of a practical man, ought to be able to effect some savings. If you are not too proud, you may on

various occasions be able to strike a bargain. If you come to an uninteresting country you had better drive, and the expense, when distributed, becomes moderate. In my own pedestrian expeditions, whenever we have come to the head of a lake or the side of a navigable river, the rule has always been to take a boat and row down it, often for many miles at a time, an agreeable change. It is very pleasant to have ladies in the party; but, while anxious to avoid anything that may sound at all ungallant, the blunt truth is always best. The character of the walking tour is essentially altered if we are favoured with those lovely encumbrances. They will cause an additional outlay of both time and money. Of course they will indignantly repudiate the idea. They can go wherever men can go, and their expenses will be much less than the expenses in which men indulge themselves. But practically men are much too gallant to permit this. There must be a pony-carriage to take the light luggage or any lovely traveller when fatigued, and we must order a better dinner with a little champagne for the sake of the ladies. The presence of ladies is a great improvement, but it entirely changes the character of the excursion. That notion of a basket carriage is not at all a bad one, even for pedestrian tourists, to carry one's effects and give an occasional lift. This, however, interferes with the exact idea of a walking tour. Only it must be borne in mind that our walkers have, perhaps, separate tastes which claim indulgence. One man may have a great idea of qualifying himself as scientific; he may be making observations and taking sketch-maps. Another is an etcher. A third is a poet.

So there may be a good deal of lagging on the road, and an occasional off-day. This must be made up for by an occasional forced march if the programme is to be carried out and the skeleton tour accomplished.

If it is necessary to plan your companionship well, it is equally well, it is equally desirable, to have the general object, details, and route carefully mapped out. All pedestrians may be divided into two classes—those who walk for walking sake, and those who walk for an object. I know people who say that they cannot walk unless they have something to go for and somewhere to go to. Now I believe, to use Aristotelian language, that walking is an end-in-itself. I think, however, that other ends may be combined with this general end. I am a great friend to what are called tours of observation. For instance, Mr. Evans walked through Bosnia and Herzegovina, and gave us a most useful book at a critical time; and Major Campion walked through Spain from sea to sea, and became most familiar with the people in their ways and homes. There have been times in our own country when a walk through mining and agricultural districts may possess a political interest and importance. For those who know our plants and flowers, or have an interest in archaeology, nearly every mile of English ground has its interest. Still, selecting the best ground we can get, speaking from one's own predilections, I would especially recommend Wales and the Highlands, the Lake districts, and our western peninsula of Devonshire and Cornwall. Going farther, who would not desire the walking tour through continental forests or by Norwegian fiords, or amid Alps, Apennines, or Pyrenees?

Here we get the combination of fine scenery, bracing air, and pleasant companionship. In my own point of view, the human interest ought to transcend every other. The finest minds have felt that there is no greater joy on earth than 'exquisite companionship.' Old Johnson liked the man 'who could put his mind fairly to yours.' In the free, unrestrained, leisurely converse of

the march and of the bivouac, you taste this social happiness to the full. The walking party becomes a talking party. You know your friends better; and what is also of importance, you come to know yourself better. The walking party is certainly the cheapest, and, if properly managed, may be the healthiest and most enjoyable of summer holiday excursions.

THE SONG OF THE SWING.

*Our swing hangs 'neath the willow-tree,
And we two merry maidens be.*

CELIA.

Swing high, swing low !
O, while we go,
Mine be the soul that first shall sing,
And thine the spirit answering.

ANTHEA.

Swing low, swing high !
We mount, we fly !
The first sweet singer shalt thou be,
And I with song will answer thee.

CELIA.

My soul is as the winds that sweep
From shore to shore across the deep ;—

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a bird to flit
From tree to tree inviting it.

CELIA.

O, mine is as the strain that soars
As high, as high
As words can fly,
Then downward all its rapture pours.

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a voice to roam ;
From steep to steep
It loves to leap,
Till Echo backward brings it home.

The Song of the Swing.

CELIA.

With ebb and flow the ceaseless tide
Creeps in and out, and far and wide;—

ANTHEA.

With ebb and flow 'tis ours to ride
Upon a light love's fickle tide.

CELIA.

Swing high, swing low !
Yet say not so ;
For Silvio surely loves me well,
And what sad tale hast thou to tell ?

ANTHEA.

Swing low, swing high !
Nor weep, nor sigh ;
He loves not well who loves not long,
Shall be the burden of my song.

CELIA.

My soul is as some sheltered bay,
Where Silvio's barque shall ever stay ;—

ANTHEA.

And mine seems as a wind to sweep
This pirate Silvio from the deep.

CELIA.

He loves me—

ANTHEA.

True ! He loves me too ;
He loves, he loves, as false men do :

CELIA.

But then, last night he softly said—

ANTHEA.

That he and I should some day wed !

CELIA.

Then, twixt the red rose and the white,
His love shall find no rest to-night.

ANTHEA.

Betwixt the white rose and the red,
Though he may roam he shall not wed.

CELIA AND ANTHEA.

Ah, no, no, no !
For high or low,
He loves not well who loves not long,
Shall be the burden of our song.

S. WADDINGTON.

